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The Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected: A Case Study of Gifted English Learners in Two Austin Elementary Schools

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The Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected: A Case Study of Gifted English Learners in Two Austin Elementary Schools

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my maternal grandmother, Bertha McLemore, who gave me the *consejo* —

> *Aprenda hacer todo, porque si eres rico, puedes mandarlo correcto, y si eres pobre, puedes hacerlo ti mismo.*

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Given that this dissertation involves the intersection of psychological assessment, minority education, gifted education, and bilingual education, I'd also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Drs. Toni Falbo, Peg Semrud-Clikeman, Alba Ortiz, Mary Black, and Ernesto Bernal for generously offering their vast expertise in this undertaking. I could not ask for a better committee to guide me through this process. I also want to offer my deepest and heartfelt thank you to my supervisor, mentor, and

friend, Dr. Richard Valencia for the guidance, kindness, and example you have provided for me. Through your mentorship, I have learned not only how to be a better scholar, but a better person as well.

A final and special thank you to my family for the unending love and support you have given me throughout this arduous process, and throughout my life. To my parents, Martha and Reuben Rodríguez, who have given so much for me to become the person I am, I doubt I could even repay the debt (*although I will repay the money I borrowed…*), but know that I am eternally grateful. To my brother- and sister-in-law, José Louis and Claudia, thank you for the encouragement you have given without even being asked. To my sisters, Desireé and C'Leste, thank you for being both an inspiration and a role model for me to strive to the utmost of my abilities. Finally, to my nieces and nephew, Allyssa, John-Michael, and Chloe, I hope your Uncle Bruno's accomplishments will serve to inspire and encourage you to always seek to learn and grow.

The Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected: A Case Study of Gifted English Learners in Two Austin Elementary Schools

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The identification of gifted children — beginning with the landmark study of "genius" by Lewis Terman (1925) — has relied heavily on intelligence test scores to determine eligibility for gifted programs. Racial/ethnic minority students, especially Latinos and African Americans, however, continue to be underidentified as gifted (Chinn & Hughes, 1987; Harris & Ford, 1991; Valencia & Suzuki, 2001). Gifted English learners (ELs), coined "the neglected of the neglected of the neglected" by Valencia and Villarreal (2001), are even less likely to be identified as gifted. Valencia, Villarreal, and Salinas (2002) offered four promising best-case practices that might serve to increase minority representation in programs for the gifted, including gifted EL Latinos. Little research has been conducted to examine, however, if schools *actually employ* alternative practices, and to what extent schools are successful in increasing the number of ELs identified as gifted.

This dissertation explored the question: How can the representation of EL Latinos in gifted programs be improved? Although this pervasive pattern of underrepresentation of gifted EL Latinos in most schools in AISD has been documented (Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Valencia et al., 2002), some schools defy this pattern and identify ELs at relatively higher rates when compared to other schools. The purpose of this study was twofold. First, quantitative analyses of incidence data for the Austin Independent School District (AISD) revealed that, as a group, EL Latinos are underrepresented in gifted programs at rates above and beyond the rates of English-speaking Latino children. This study also explored the factors that contribute to the successful identification and placement of gifted EL Latinos in these schools. Interviews with school administrators, teachers, and assessment personnel and observations of selection committee meetings were conducted that validated two hypothesized factors that promote the successful identification and placement of EL Latinos in gifted programs.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout recorded history, the accomplishments and abilities of gifted children have always captured the attention of societies at large (Colangelo & Davis, 1997). Such attention to giftedness appeared in the U.S. in the mid-1800s, sparking a movement toward differentiated education for children who demonstrated superior abilities (Newland, 1976; cited in Valencia & Suzuki, 2001). Racial/ethnic minority students, especially Latinos and African Americans, however, have been and continue to be underidentified as gifted (Chinn & Hughes, 1987; Ford, 1998; Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002; Harris & Ford, 1991; Valencia & Suzuki). One possible explanation for this minority underrepresentation may be due to the view of giftedness as a unidimensional trait — namely, superior intelligence. That is, the identification of gifted children — beginning with the landmark study of "genius" by Lewis Terman (1925) — has relied heavily on intelligence test scores to determine eligibility for gifted programs, with a score of 2 standard deviations above the mean (130 IQ) typically the lower limit for eligibility. Given that Latino and African American students, on average, perform lower than their White counterparts on intelligence tests (Valencia & Suzuki), the near exclusive use of intelligence test scores to identify giftedness reduces the number of racial/ethnic minority students that might qualify for gifted programs (Bernal, 1994; Valencia & Suzuki).

A subset of the racial/ethnic minority school population even less likely to be identified as gifted is that of students who do not speak English or are learning English — gifted English learners (ELs). For EL students who may be gifted, reliance on intelligence test scores for identification is of particular concern, given that high proficiency in English is critical for superior performance on intelligence tests with high demands on English verbal abilities. These students' performance on intelligence tests may not reflect their true abilities, but reflect their ability (or lack thereof) to perform at superior levels in English (Barkan & Bernal, 1991; Bernal, 1979; Evans de Bernard, 1985). This state of affairs does not, however, necessarily have to be the case.

This dissertation explores the question: How can the representation of EL Latinos in gifted programs be improved? Valencia, Villarreal, and Salinas (2002) offered four promising best-case practices that might serve to increase minority representation in programs for the gifted, including gifted EL Latinos. These practices include: (a) behavioral rating scales; (b) pluralistic assessment; (c) parental nomination/education, and (d) linking bilingual and gifted education. Research appears to support the use of alternatives to traditional assessment procedures such as intelligence tests or teacher nominations to identify gifted racial/ethnic minority students (Elliott, Argulewicz, & Turco, 1986; Mercer, 1977; Scott, Perou, Urbano, Hogan, & Gold, 1992; U.S. Department of Education, Office for Educational Research and Improvement, 1998). Little research has been conducted to examine, however, if schools *actually employ* alternative practices (e.g., behavioral rating scales; parent nominations), and to what extent schools are successful in increasing the number of ELs identified as gifted.

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, I provided empirical support for the notion coined by Valencia and Villarreal (2001): "the neglected of the neglected of the neglected." Imbedded within this tripartite concept are: (a) the *primary* level of neglect of gifted children in general ("the neglected"), and (b) the *secondary* level of neglect of gifted racial/ethnic minority children ("the neglected of the neglected"). Valencia and Suzuki (2001) provided a comprehensive analysis of the literature base on giftedness and gifted education that illustrate these two levels. The aforementioned *tertiary* level of neglect, gifted ELs (the neglected of the neglected of the neglected), however, has very little empirical support. In this dissertation, I conducted quantitative analyses of incidence data for the Austin Independent School District (AISD). I demonstrate that, as a group, EL Latinos are underrepresented in gifted programs at rates above and beyond the rates of non-EL Latino children.

Although the pervasive pattern of underrepresentation of gifted EL Latinos in most schools in AISD is documented (see Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Valencia et al., 2002), some schools — I suggest — defy this pattern and identify ELs at relatively higher rates when compared to other schools. The second purpose of this dissertation is to explore the factors that contribute to the successful identification and placement of gifted EL Latinos in these schools via a multiple case study approach. I conducted interviews with school administrators, teachers, and assessment personnel to obtain information regarding two of the three factors I hypothesize that promote the successful identification and placement of EL Latinos in gifted programs. Utilizing this interview methodology, I intend to develop a "working snapshot" of the interactions of the participating schools.

This dissertation consists of five additional chapters. In Chapter 2, Setting the Stage: Defining the "Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected," I examine three evidentiary bases to define this very important notion. First, I provide a summary of reviews of the literature base on giftedness as it concerns gifted students in general, racial/ethnic minorities, and EL Latinos. Second, I analyze budgetary allocations for gifted programs at the state and district level in relation to the financial support that other curricular programs receive (e.g., regular education; special education). Third, I examine gifted enrollment data at national, regional, state, and district levels to examine underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs. In Chapter 3, The "Ideal" Identification of Gifted ELs, I present a theoretical framework proposed by Frasier (1987) that delineates an "ideal" model to identify more minorities for gifted programs. From Frasier's list, I developed a conceptual model that allows me to delimit the scope of my investigation, focusing on two of the three factors I believe are operating in successful schools. In Chapter 4, I describe my research design and methodology to carry out the study. In Chapter 5, I present the results of this study. Finally, in Chapter 6, I provide conclusions, discussing these results, limitations, and implications for research and practice.

Chapter 2

Setting the Stage: Defining the "Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected"

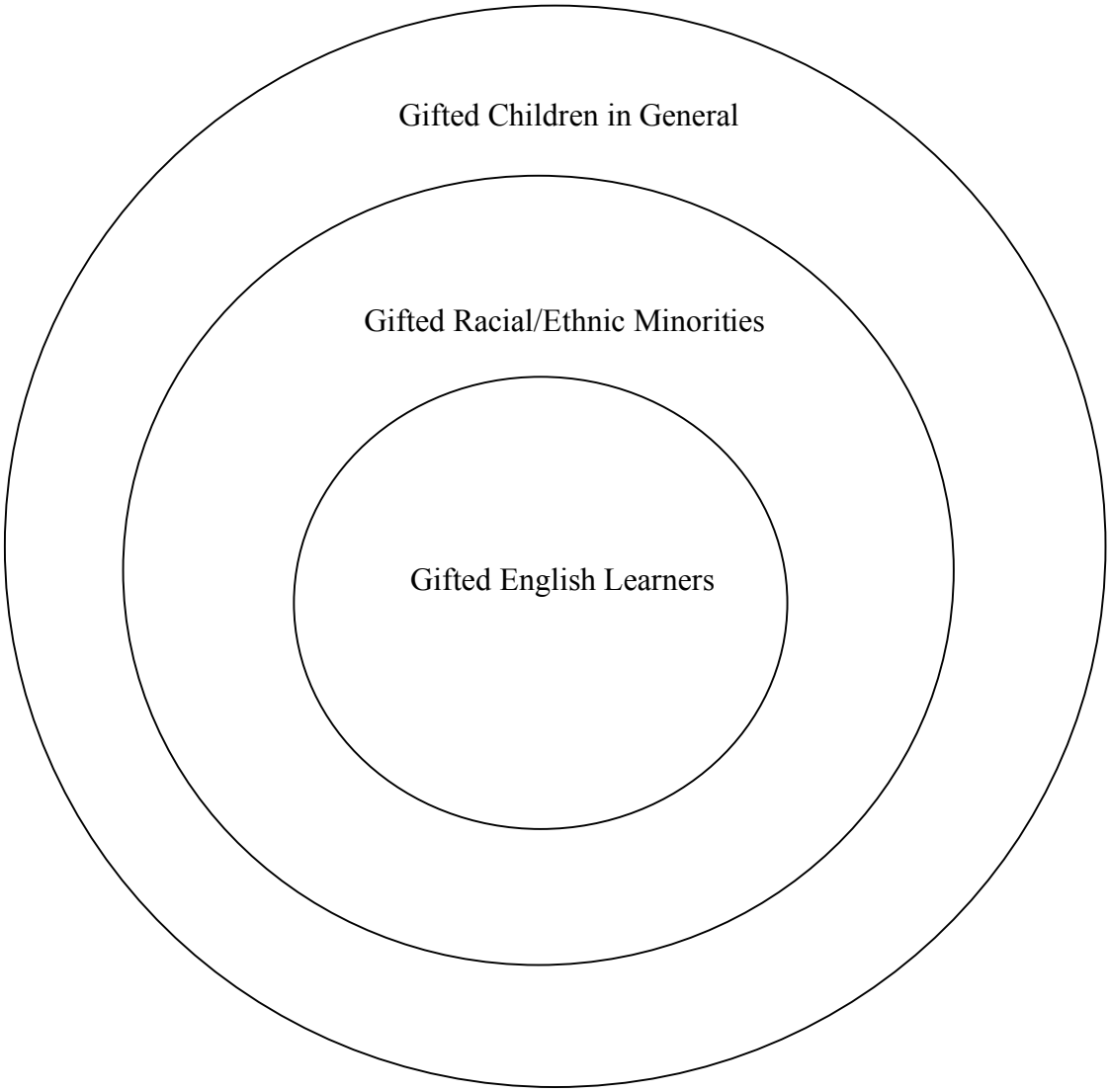
The study of giftedness and gifted education is a distinct scholarly domain, stretching back to the mid-1800s,[1] as seen in Galton's (1870) work, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into Its Laws and Consequences*. Valencia & Suzuki (2001) wrote that Galton believed that genius was an hereditary trait, and that men of eminence (e.g., statesmen; military commanders; scientists; poets) were in such positions due to their "natural gifts" that were genetically inherited via their parents and ancestors who held positions of eminence.[2] In the 1920s, newly developed intelligence tests were used to identify gifted students — that is, students who obtained IQ scores of 130 points or higher were deemed gifted. The near-exclusive use of intelligence tests to identify giftedness, however, presented problems for the identification of gifted racial/ethnic minority students, as these tests were heavily verbally loaded, reflected middle-class White cultural values, and excluded minorities from the standardization sample (Valencia & Suzuki). As such, minority students, on average, typically scored below the normative mean on these tests, and were very unlikely to be identified as gifted. A subset of the racial/ethnic minority school population even less likely to be identified as gifted were those students who did not speak English — gifted English learners (ELs). Given that ELs, in addition to belonging to minority groups that typically do not perform at superior levels on intelligence tests, the exclusive use of verbally loaded *English*-language

intelligence tests to identify giftedness would effectively preclude ELs from performing at superior levels and being identified as gifted.

This group of students — gifted ELs — is the primary population of interest in this dissertation. Gifted ELs constitute a subset of the gifted racial/ethnic minority population, that is, in turn, a subset of the gifted population. This multiple embeddedness can be graphically represented as a set of concentric circles (see Figure 2.1, next page). The outermost circle delineates the gifted population, the middle circle, the subset of gifted minorities, and the innermost circle, the subset of gifted minority ELs. With respect to the issue of neglect of gifted students, this concentric model is also very illustrative. Just as gifted students in general are neglected within the total student population, gifted minority students are neglected within the larger gifted population. Furthermore, gifted ELs are more deeply embedded within the gifted minority population, reflecting a tertiary level of neglect.

As I discuss later in this chapter, giftedness is a relatively neglected area of concern within the broader context of American education. This primary level of neglect of the gifted in general, however, has more profound effects on the secondary level, gifted racial/ethnic minority students — whom Valencia and Suzuki (2001) described as the "neglected of the neglected" — as they represent a subset of the gifted population in general. Moreover, the profound neglect at the secondary level is compounded even further at the tertiary level, gifted ELs — coined "the neglected of the neglected of the neglected" by Valencia and Villarreal (2001). In this chapter, I will examine these three levels of neglect.

Figure 2.1
Multiple Embeddedness of Neglect Among the Gifted in General, Gifted Minorities, and Gifted English Learners



This chapter is divided in two parts: The first section explores the availability of research and financial support for gifted education as it concerns racial/ethnic minority students, and particularly gifted EL Latinos. The second section examines the student enrollment data in gifted programs at national, regional, state, and local school district levels. The enrollment data at these four levels show persistent patterns of underrepresentation of racial/ethnic minority students, particularly African Americans and Mexican Americans (and other Latinos). These patterns also show even greater underrepresentation of ELs in gifted programs.

A Review of the Literature Base on Giftedness

In order to understand the concept of the "neglected of the neglected of the neglected," it is necessary to examine this notion within the broader context of gifted education. In this section, I examine the neglect of the gifted population as evidenced by the scope and availability of scholarly research in this area. I begin by investigating the literature base on giftedness at the primary level of neglect — gifted children in general.

The Primary Level: Research on Giftedness in General – The Neglected

Valencia and Suzuki (2001) offer a comprehensive analysis of the available literature that demonstrates the relative scholarly neglect of gifted students. For this section, I draw heavily from their analysis. Although scholars, beginning with Galton in

1870, have been interested in giftedness, it is still a relatively neglected area of educational and psychological research.

By the 1920s, scholars interested in giftedness and gifted education had begun to develop a small, but growing literature base on giftedness. The first such compilation of scholarly literature on giftedness can be seen in Part I of the National Society for the Study of Education's 23rd *Yearbook*, entitled *Report of the Society's Committee on the Education of Gifted Children* (Whipple, 1924). Valencia and Suzuki (2001) noted: "the society's report was a compendium of knowledge, opinions, and advocacy regarding the gifted. Topics included personal, social, and physical characteristics, as well as history and selection strategies, of the gifted; curriculum; and academic/career attainments" (p. 212). Regarding the growing interest in giftedness in the scholarly literature, Whipple attributed this growth to, among other factors, the development of intelligence testing. Intelligence testing, especially *group*-administered intelligence testing, was a means to identify "pupils of superior school capacity with a degree of precision far greater than that obtainable by means of school marks and teachers' estimates of intelligence" (Whipple, p. 7). This reliance on intelligence tests for identification purposes was to have strong implications for minority children.

As part of the 23rd *Yearbook*, Henry (1924) compiled a bibliography of scholarly works on giftedness published between 1894 and 1923. Henry identified 453 citations on giftedness, ranging from the characteristics of gifted children, and curriculum differentiation, to studies examining the efficacy of using intelligence tests to identify gifted children.

Although Henry's compilation of 453 citations is impressive, three important concerns remain. First, Henry cited the *Annotated Bibliography Dealing with the Classification and Instruction of Pupils to Provide for Individual Differences* as a source for his bibliography, but it is unknown which other databases, if any, Henry used to compile his bibliography. Second, Henry did not provide any criteria or search procedures utilized to identify scholarly works on giftedness, therefore it would be impossible to replicate his compilation. Finally, given that Henry did not provide the number of citations in the extant psychological and educational databases at the time, there is no way of gauging the relative amount of attention that was paid to the gifted in the scholarly literature.

As discussed by Valencia and Suzuki (2001), another review of the literature on giftedness was conducted by Albert (1969). Valencia & Suzuki examined Albert's study for trends, the author's content analysis, and conclusions. Here, I summarize the discussion presented by Valencia and Suzuki.

- Albert (1969) used the following descriptions to identify references in the *Cumulative Subject Index to Psychological Abstracts* (1927-1960) and *Psychological Abstracts* (1960-1965): Category A — "genius," "distinction," "eminence," and " fame"; Category B — "creative," "gifted children," and "giftedness."
- Of the total *N* of 264,453 references published between 1927 and 1965, only 1,318 references (0.5%) pertained to both categories; only 1,126 (0.4%) pertained to Category B, the category most relevant to this discussion.

- A trend analysis by Valencia and Suzuki revealed that for research between the 1920s and 1950s, the majority of publications were conducted and published in the 1950s, corresponding with major political changes in the U.S. — Sputnik and the "space race" with the former Soviet Union.

In addition to the literature reviews by Henry (1924) and Albert (1969), Valencia and Suzuki (2001) conducted a review of the literature base on giftedness. Using the terms "children," "youth," "students," and "gifted," Valencia and Suzuki performed an electronic search in July, 1999 of the *Current Index to Journals of Education* (*CIJE*) and *Psychological Abstracts* (*PA*). In their literature review, Valencia and Suzuki focused primarily on literature on gifted racial/ethnic minorities (the secondary level, which I will discuss more fully in the next section), and did not report data at the primary level. Their methodology, however, proved quite useful. I performed another electronic search using the same descriptors as search criteria.[3] As of March 2004, there were 497,229 citations in the *CIJE* database, illustrating the size of the extant educational literature base on children, youths, or students. When the descriptor "gifted" was added to delimit the search, the number reduced to 10,207 citations, indicating that literature on giftedness comprises only 2.1% of the educational literature. In comparison to the proportion of the educational literature base devoted to giftedness, literature on special education constitutes 9.8% (n = 48,760 citations), while other areas of educational research such as curriculum (n = 78,643 citations; 15.8%), teaching (n = 124,902 citations, 25.1%), and learning (n = 139,681 citations, 28.1%) comprise much larger percentages of the educational literature base. Similarly, in the *PA* database, there were 603,339 citations on

children, youths, or students, and only 6,439 citations on giftedness, representing 1.1% of the psychological literature base. Research in other areas, such as special education (*n* = 19,251 citations; 3.2%), mental retardation (*n* = 15,347 citations, 2.5%), and learning disabilities (*n* = 13,366 citations, 2.2%) constitute larger percentages of the psychological literature base. This analysis demonstrates clearly that giftedness is a neglected area of educational and psychological research.

From this analysis, one must consider the scholarly question of *why* research on giftedness and gifted education in general constitutes such a very small part of the educational and psychological literature. One possible explanation that may illustrate the relative neglect of gifted children is society's "love-hate" relationship with giftedness:

> The attitude toward gifted students at a personal and societal level has often been one of ambivalence, in both the educational setting, and society at large. We may love the creative products of their mental processes, but still feel the sting of envy when we observe some persons doing, with apparent ease, what is so difficult for others to accomplish. Such conflict between the public interest and personal feelings has been felt in societies and has been a barrier to the education of gifted and talented students. (Gallagher, 1993, p. 83, quoted in Valencia & Suzuki, 2001, p. 209)

From the literature reviews by Henry (1924) Albert (1969), and Valencia and Suzuki (2001) as well as my most recent analysis, it is clear that giftedness and gifted education as an area of study continues to be underresearched.

Another manner in which to illustrate the neglect of gifted children and gifted education in general is to examine the financial support provided for gifted programs at the state and district level. Given that school financing falls under the auspices of the individual states, and that the funding of programs for the gifted is voluntary (as opposed to mandated federal funding for programs such as special education), there are no databases to analyze funding of gifted programs at the national level. I will restrict this analysis, therefore, to funding supports in Texas and AISD, respectively.

To analyze the budgetary allocations for gifted programs in Texas and AISD, I obtained data from the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Academic Excellence Indicator System* (AEIS), Texas' free, public, online database for its accountability system. The AEIS profiles provide data at the state, regional, district, and campus levels for every public school district in Texas for all the indicators TEA uses in its accountability system to rate its public schools. These indicators include, for example, passing rates for state-mandated tests at the various grade levels, student enrollment data, teacher credentialing and experience, and budgetary information.

In 2002-2003 (the most recent school year in which data were available), Texas' education budget was $30,054,426,935 for total expenditures. Of that total, $26,785,133,012 (89.1%) was budgeted for operating expenses. From this subtotal, $15,258,107,372 (57.0%) was allocated for instruction. The instructional operating budget was further broken down by program. These data are presented in Table 2.1 (next page). As can be seen in Table 2.1, regular education was allocated $10.8 billion and

Table 2.1
Budgeted Instructional Expenditures by Program, Texas: 2002-2003

Program	Amount	Percent
Regular education	$10,802,248,017	70.8
Special education	1,924,085,228	12.6
Compensatory education	795,042,137	5.2
Bilingual/ESL education	683,976,391	4.5
Career and technology education	621,924,366	4.1
Gifted and talented education	279,490,838	1.8
Other	151,340,395	1.0
Total	$15,258,107,372	100.0

Source: Texas Education Agency (2004).

comprised the largest proportion of expenditures, accounting for 70.8% of the budget. Special education was next largest, comprising $1.9 billion, for a comparatively small 12.6%. Compensatory, bilingual/ESL, and career and technology education had the next largest program allocations, comprising 5.2%, 4.5%, and 4.1%, respectively, of the total instructional expenditures budget. By sharp contrast, gifted and talented education was allocated $279.5 million, only 1.8% of the state's total instructional expenditures budget. From a financial perspective, gifted education constitutes one of the smallest proportions of Texas' total instructional budget.

At the district level, we find the funding for gifted programs in AISD is even more impoverished. In 2002-2003, AISD's education budget was $572,028,195 in total expenditures, with $507,850,940 (88.7%) allocated for operating expenses. From this allocation, $282,902,583 (55.7%) was earmarked for instruction. The allocations for individual programs are presented in Table 2.2 (next page). As can be seen, AISD's budget follows a similar pattern to that of the state. Regular education was allocated $164 million, accounting for 58.1% of the budget, while special education was next

Table 2.2
Budgeted Instructional Expenditures by Program, AISD: 2002-2003

Program	Amount	Percent
Regular education	$164,255,928	58.1
Special education	56,750,891	20.1
Bilingual/ESL education	37,285,345	13.2
Compensatory education	10,849,388	3.8
Career and technology education	8,290,216	2.9
Other	2,822,193	1.0
Gifted and talented education	2,588,622	0.9
Total	$282,902,583	100.0

Source: Texas Education Agency (2004).

largest with $56.7 million allocated, for 20.1%. Bilingual/ESL, compensatory, and career and technology education had the next three largest program allocations, comprising 13.2%, 3.8%, and 2.9%, respectively, of the total instructional expenditures budget. Gifted and talented education, however, had the smallest portion of the instructional budget allocations, receiving only $2.6 million, accounting for only 0.9% of the total instructional expenditures budget — a clear indicator of the relative level of neglect for the gifted.

Another way to examine the neglect of gifted students in general is to compare the enrollment rates of the various instructional programs with their respective allocations in the operating budget via disparity analysis. Although the AEIS provides data on the budgetary allocations for the different programs, it only provides data on enrollment rates for special education, bilingual/ESL education, career and technology education, and gifted education. The enrollment for these four programs is 52.7%. Therefore, I estimated the combined regular education, compensatory education, and "Other" enrollment rate to be 47.3% by subtracting the sum of the other four programs'

enrollment rates from 100%. These data are presented in Table 2.3. Regular education (combined with compensatory education and the "Other" category) account for 47.3% of the student enrollment in Texas, but receive 77.0% of the instructional budget, for an overrepresentation of 62.8% of funding. By contrast, gifted education enrolls 7.8% of the student population in Texas, but is allocated only 1.8% of the budget, for an underrepresentation of 76.9%.

Table 2.3
Disparity Analysis of Student Enrollment and Budgetary Allocations, Texas: 2002-2003

Program	Student Enrollment[a] (%)	Budgetary Allocation[b] (%)	Disparity[c] (%)
Regular, compensatory education, and other	47.3	77.0	+62.8
Special education	11.6	12.6	+8.6
Bilingual/ESL education	13.5	4.5	-66.7
Career and technology education	19.8	4.1	-79.3
Gifted and talented education	7.8	1.8	-76.9

Source: Texas Education Agency (2004).
[a]Student enrollment = percentage of total K-12 population enrolled in program.
[b]Budgetary allocation = percentage of total instructional budget allocated for program.
[c]In the percentage disparity column, a plus sign (+) indicates overrepresentation and a minus sign (-) indicates underrepresentation.

From these data, it is clear that gifted students do not receive the financial support commensurate with their portion of the student population at the state level. Likewise, bilingual/ESL education (66.7% underrepresentation) and career and technology education (79.3% underrepresentation) do not receive their proper proportion of funding.

At the district level, we find a very similar situation regarding the plight of gifted students. The combined enrollments in AISD for special education, bilingual/ESL education, career and technology education and gifted education was 51.6%. Therefore, I estimated the combined regular education, compensatory education, and "Other"

enrollment rate to be 48.4% by subtracting the sum of the other four programs' enrollment rates from 100%. The enrollment and budgetary data for AISD are presented in Table 2.4. Regular education/ compensatory education/other programs account for 48.4% of the total AISD K-12 enrollment, but receive 62.9% of the instructional budget,

Table 2.4
Disparity Analysis of Student Enrollment and Budgetary Allocations, AISD: 2002-2003

Program	Student Enrollment[a] (%)	Budgetary Allocation[b] (%)	Disparity[c] (%)
Regular, compensatory education, and other	48.4	62.9	+30.0
Special education	12.0	20.1	+67.5
Bilingual/ESL education	19.7	13.2	-33.0
Career and technology education	12.7	2.9	-77.2
Gifted and talented education	7.2	0.9	-87.5

Source: Texas Education Agency (2004).
[a]Student enrollment = percentage of total K-12 population enrolled in program.
[b]Budgetary allocation = percentage of total instructional budget allocated for program.
[c]In the percentage disparity column, a plus sign (+) indicates overrepresentation and a minus sign (-) indicates underrepresentation.

for an overrepresentation of 30.0% of funding. Gifted students in AISD, by contrast, are even more neglected than at the state level, as they account for 7.8% of the total AISD student population, yet receive only 0.9% of the instructional budget — an underrepresentation of 87.5%. This disparity analysis provides incontrovertible evidence that gifted students at the district level do not receive their proportionate share of the financial support. Moreover, bilingual/ESL and career and technology education also do not receive their proportionate share of financial support.

In sum, there is clear evidence of the neglect of gifted children in general, both in the scholarly literature and in the financial support of programs for the gifted. These

neglectful attitudes towards gifted children and giftedness in general have serious implications for racial/ethnic minority students.

The Secondary Level: Gifted Minority Students – The Neglected of the Neglected

The dearth of scholarly literature on giftedness and gifted education, and analyses of financial expenditures for programs for the gifted clearly demonstrate that gifted children in general are neglected. This neglect is compounded, however, with respect to gifted racial/ethnic minority students, "the neglected of the neglected," as coined by Valencia and Suzuki (2001).

As mentioned previously, Henry's (1924) bibliography was comprehensive and impressive for its time. Henry did not acknowledge, however, any literature that included racial/ethnic minorities as participants in empirical studies on gifted children, as subjects of case studies, or characteristics of gifted minorities. Likewise, Albert (1969) also noted that there was scant attention paid to racial/ethnic minorities. Furthermore, Tannenbaum (1983; cited in Valencia & Suzuki, 2001) noted that during the 1960s, national attention turned away from gifted children and their education, focusing more on economically disadvantaged racial/ethnic minorities. One possible explanation for this secondary level of neglect may rest in the way that giftedness has been traditionally conceptualized, namely, superior performance on intelligence tests. The scholar largely responsible for this paradigm is Lewis Terman.

Terman (1925), in his landmark study of "genius," canvassed almost exclusively White children in schools throughout California, and relied heavily on intelligence test

scores. From his study, the use of intelligence test scores appeared to be the ideal way to identify children of superior abilities. Utilizing the criterion of 140 (or greater) IQ in measured intelligence as a standard for identifying giftedness, Terman's (1925) study is important because it set the IQ standard for the identification of gifted children, a legacy that continues to the present. Furthermore, Terman followed up with the participants of his original 1925 study, conducting one of the longest and most ambitious longitudinal studies of gifted children.

Notwithstanding the importance of Terman's (1925) study, the near-exclusive use of intelligence tests to identify gifted children has had an effect on the prospects of identifying gifted minorities. Valencia and Suzuki (2001) noted that, "since the advent of intelligence testing during the 1920s, a voluminous body of research has documented the consistent finding that minority students (e.g., Latinos, African Americans, American Indians) perform below the norm, on average, on most standardized intelligence tests" (p. 208). This consistent finding may help to explain, in part, the pervasive belief held by many White educators that minority students, especially African Americans and Latinos, are incapable of being gifted. Bernal (1979) summed up this notion cogently: "The juxtaposition of minority and gifted still produces dissonance in the minds of many educators" (p. 395). Given the generally ambivalent societal attitude towards giftedness, and the perceived low educability of racial/ethnic minorities (Valencia, 1997), the reliance on superior performance on intelligence tests to identify giftedness does not bode well for the prospects of gifted racial/ethnic minority students. The extant literature base offers clear evidence of this secondary level of neglect.

Valencia and Suzuki (2001), in their historical sketch on giftedness, commented that the 1970s brought forth a resurgence of interest in giftedness, with the U.S. Congress commissioning a study on the status of gifted and talented children. The "Marland Report," named after then Commissioner of Education Sydney Marland, found that gifted and talented children were, by and large, underserved (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1972). The report also found that "minority and culturally different gifted and talented children were scarcely being reached" (Jackson, 1979, p. 48; cited in Valencia & Suzuki, p. 218). In addition, Ford and Harris (1990) examined the literature base from 1924 to the late 1980s on giftedness, finding similar patterns of neglect of gifted minority students. Although Ford and Harris did not describe their search methodology, they reported that of the 4,109 references they identified on giftedness from 1924 to the late 1980s, only 75 references (1.8%) pertained to gifted minority students. This updated review of research on the state of the literature base on giftedness validates a continuing pattern of neglect of research on gifted minority students.

Valencia and Suzuki (2001) also conducted a review of the literature base on gifted minority students. Using the terms "gifted," "children," "youth," and "students" as a starting point for their analysis, the authors performed an electronic search in July, 1999 of the *Current Index to Journals of Education* (*CIJE*) and *Psychological Abstracts* (*PA*) databases. The authors identified 4,531 and 2,544 citations in each database, respectively. When the authors restricted their searches to minority students (using the search term "minority"), however, the number of citations shrank to 384 citations in the

CIJE (8%), and 102 in the *PA* (4%) databases, respectively. This reduction of research citations on gifted minorities is clear evidence of the neglect of gifted minorities in the scholarly literature.

I conducted an updated analysis of the literature in March 2004, using the same methodology as Valencia and Suzuki (2001). Using the same electronic search criteria, I identified 10,207 and 6,439 citations in the *CIJE* and *PA* databases, respectively, for all citations that pertained to gifted children, youths, and students. When I restricted the searches to minority students, however, the number of citations shrank, as expected, to 724 citations in *CIJE* (7.1%), and 163 in *PA* (2.5%). Comparing the relative proportions of citations pertaining to gifted minorities reported by Valencia and Suzuki in 1999 and the current analysis, I found that there has been a reduction in the percentage of research citations that involve gifted minorities as a proportion of the corpus of research pertaining to gifted children. These analyses provide further evidence from the literature base on giftedness that the amount of research on gifted minorities is not growing apace with the field.

In sum, given the lack of research on giftedness in general, as illustrated by Henry (1924), Albert (1969), and the persistent minimal attention given to gifted racial/ethnic minority children, as seen in the analyses by Harris and Ford (1990), Valencia and Suzuki (2001), and more recently by the present author, it is reasonable to conclude that gifted minority children are, in the words of Valencia & Suzuki, the "neglected of the neglected" (p. 216).

The Tertiary Level: Gifted ELs – The Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected

If gifted minority students are the "neglected of the neglected," then gifted ELs are certainly the "neglected of the neglected of the neglected."[4] Gifted ELs, if identified at all, usually are identified *after* they are deemed proficient in English (Barkan & Bernal, 1991). "One might ask, 'How can children who speak no English possibly meet score requirements for placement in an English gifted program?'" (Evans de Bernard, 1985, p. 80). As would be expected, the answer typically is that they cannot. Assessment practices that strictly rely on English-language intelligence and achievement tests preclude ELs from performing at superior levels. Thus, ELs are unlikely to be identified as gifted. However, requiring English proficiency to identify giftedness is problematic, as it underscores the point made by Barkan and Bernal: "One does not have to be fluent in English to be intelligent" (p. 144).

Consistent with the contention that gifted ELs are the "neglected of the neglected of the neglected," the literature base for gifted ELs is even more limited than that of gifted minorities. To investigate the breadth of literature pertaining to gifted ELs, Valencia, Villarreal, and Salinas (2002) performed an electronic search in March 2001 similar to that of Valencia and Suzuki (2001) described above. Utilizing the same base descriptors ("gifted," "children," "youths," "students," and "minority") for the *CIJE* and *PA* databases, Valencia et al. identified, as of March 2001, 5,137 citations in the *CIJE* database, and 2,640 citations in the *PA* database. When the search was delimited using the descriptors "bilingual," "limited English proficient," and "English as a Second Language," the number of citations was significantly reduced. In the *CIJE*, only 51 (1%)

of the total 5,137 citations were identified as pertaining to gifted ELs. In the *PA*, only 7 (0.3%) of 2,640 citations were identified. This very small percentage of research citations on gifted ELs provides clear evidence that gifted ELs are significantly more neglected in the scholarly literature than gifted minorities.

Using the same methodology in Valencia et al. (2002), I conducted another electronic search of the *CIJE* and *PA* databases. As reported previously, as of March, 2004 there were 10,207 citations in the *CIJE* database, and 6,439 citations in the *PA* database that involved gifted children, youths, or students at the primary level of neglect. At the secondary level of neglect, the number of citations dropped significantly, to 724 citations in the *CIJE* and 163 citations in the *PA* databases, respectively. Finally, at the tertiary level of neglect, the number of citations was reduced dramatically. In the *CIJE*, only 77 (0.8%) of the total 10,207 citations were identified as pertaining to gifted ELs; in the *PA*, only 7 (0.1%) of 6,439 citations were identified.

Comparing the results of the analysis by Valencia et al. (2002) in 2001 to the results of this current search in 2004, some important conclusions can be made. First, the number of research citations on giftedness in general (the *primary* level) in the *CIJE*, 10,207 citations in 2004, has doubled over the last three years, up from 5,137 citations in 2001. The number of citations has increased nearly 2.5 times in the *PA* at this level, from 2,640 citations in 2001 to 6,439 in 2004. Although it has been shown that research on giftedness and gifted education occupies a very small, neglected corner of the extant educational and psychological literature bases, clearly there is interest in gifted students.

Second, the literature base on gifted minorities and gifted ELs has also increased, but the increase has not been as large. The number of citations on gifted minorities (the *secondary* level) in the *CIJE* rose from 384 to 724 citations between 2001 and 2004, for a 1.9-fold increase. Likewise, the number of citations in the *PA* database rose from 102 to 163 citations, for a 1.6-fold increase. The number of citations on gifted ELs (the *tertiary* level), however, has not increased proportionately. In the *CIJE*, the number of citations on gifted ELs rose from 51 to 77 citations, for about a 1.5-fold increase, while the number of citations in the *PA has not grown at all in the last three years*. From this disparity, it is pointedly clear that the vast majority of new research on gifted students involves White, English-speaking children.

Finally, the proportion that these two areas of study, gifted minorities and gifted ELs, account for in the entire literature base on giftedness and gifted education appears to be decreasing. Research on gifted minorities accounted for 8.0% and 4.0% of the literature in the *CIJE* and *PA* databases, respectively, in 2001; in 2004, their proportion dropped to 7.1% and 2.5%, respectively. Research on gifted ELs fared even worse, with the percentages of citations in the *CIJE* and *PA* databases dropping from 1% and 0.3% in 2001, respectively, to 0.8% and 0.1% in 2004, respectively.

	2001		2004	
	CIJE	*PA*	*CIJE*	*PA*
Gifted minorities	8.0%	4.0%	7.1%	2.5%
Gifted ELs	1.0%	0.3%	0.8%	0.1%

Given the burgeoning growth of research on giftedness, the outpacing of research on gifted ELs illustrates that these areas of study are accounting for a smaller and smaller portion of the field — further evidence of neglect. In sum, this dearth of research points

to a serious problem for psychologists and educators charged with the task of identifying and assessing EL children who might be potentially gifted.

Demographic Realities of Underrepresentation of Gifted Minorities

From the previous section, it is clear that research and financial support for gifted students, gifted racial/ethnic minorities, and gifted ELs are significantly lacking. Another way to illustrate this neglect is to examine the demographic data on racial/ethnic minorities and ELs in gifted programs. In addition to the paucity of research on gifted minorities, there has been extensive documentation of the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs dating back to Terman's (1925) landmark study of giftedness in California, mentioned previously.[5]

Valencia and Suzuki (2001) presented an incisive analysis of the racial/ethnic breakdown of the sample of participants in Terman (1925). Terman's original sample of 999 children was selected in two groups from over 250,000 cases in California. Group I consisted of 643 students selected from schools in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the East Bay area, while Group II consisted of 356 students from cities not canvassed in Group I. In their analysis, Valencia and Suzuki calculated numbers from the percentages of the 37 "racial stocks" of the 643 students in Group I provided in Terman (1926). Valencia and Suzuki noted that the total *N* of 636 obtained from their estimates was very close to Terman's *N* of 643, the discrepancy due to rounding error. Valencia and Suzuki listed the numbers and percentages of the top 10 racial stocks, as well as for "Japanese,"

"Negro," "Indian," and "Mexican" students. These data are presented in Table 2.5. The data show that, out of the total of 168,000 students canvassed for the main study, only 7 children from racial/ethnic minority groups were identified as gifted.

Table 2.5
Number and Percentages of Racial/Ethnic Groups in Terman's (1925) Study

Racial Stock	*n*	Percentage
English:	197	30.7%
German:	101	15.7%
Scottish:	73	11.3%
Jewish:	68	10.5%
Irish:	58	9.0%
French:	37	5.7%
Scottish Irish:	18	2.8%
Swedish:	16	2.5%
Italian:	9	1.4%
Welsh:	9	1.4%
Japanese:	4	0.6%
Negro:	1	0.1%
Indian:	1	0.1%
Mexican:	1	0.1%

Source: Valencia & Suzuki (2001, pp. 213-214). Adapted with permission from authors.

Valencia and Suzuki noted, however, that these glaring disparities are not unexpected. They commented that a number of factors very likely contributed to the paucity of minority children being identified as gifted. First, the use of teacher nominations (the first step in the selection process) may have resulted in a selection bias against low-SES and minority students. Second, none of the intelligence tests used in the selection process were standardized on racial/ethnic minority children, thus penalizing children who were not from White, middle-class, English-speaking backgrounds. Finally, most minority students attended inferior, segregated schools that provided little opportunity for students to learn the academic content measured, to some degree, by intelligence tests.

Beginning with Terman (1925) and continuing to the present, there has been a pervasive pattern of underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs. Evidence of

underrepresentation has often been documented by means of disparity analysis. Disparity analysis can be very useful in illustrating the pervasive pattern of underrepresentation of minorities and ELs in gifted programs, because it can mathematically quantify the degree of underrepresentation in a particular program for a particular group. To calculate a disparity, the percentage of a group's total enrollment is subtracted from the percentage of that group's enrollment in the gifted program, then this difference is divided by the percent total enrollment. The resulting index indicates the magnitude of the disparity. The sign of the quotient indicates if underrepresentation (negative) or overrepresentation (positive) is present. From the observed data, this pattern of racial/ethnic minority underrepresentation holds, as will be shown, at national, regional, state, and district levels.

Underrepresentation of Gifted Minorities

Valencia and Suzuki (2001) provided one of the most comprehensive analyses of underrepresentation of gifted racial/ethnic minorities at the national level. Utilizing data from the 1994 Office for Civil Rights survey (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 1997; hereafter the 1997 OCR survey) of elementary and secondary schools nationally, Valencia and Suzuki presented data with respect to disparities for racial/ethnic minority groups (see Valencia & Suzuki, Table 8.1, and accompanying text, pp. 228-229, for a fuller discussion). Analyzing disparities for the nation as a whole and the 10 states with the largest combined racial/ethnic minority school enrollments, Valencia and Suzuki revealed a disturbing pattern. African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians were

underrepresented in gifted programs for the *nation as a whole and all 10 states* with the largest combined minority school enrollment. Furthermore, Valencia and Suzuki reported that African Americans and Latinos were nationally underrepresented at nearly identical rates — 50.56% and 50.83%, respectively. Valencia and Suzuki also analyzed disparities for every state in the U.S. based on the 1997 OCR survey data: "With the exception of 1 state (Ohio), these students [African Americans and Latinos] are *underrepresented in every state* in the nation" (p. 232). By contrast, Valencia and Suzuki found that White students were overrepresented in gifted programs at the national level and in all but 2 states in the nation.

Valencia (2002) performed a similar disparity analysis at the national level, based on the 1998 U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights national survey (2001; hereafter the 2001 OCR survey). With respect to racial/ethnic minority representation in gifted programs at the national and state levels, Valencia found that at the national level, the patterns of underrepresentation for African Americans and Latinos in gifted programs observed in the 1997 OCR survey data held for the 2001 OCR survey data. Furthermore, this pervasive pattern of underrepresentation of Latinos again held for 49 out of 50 states in 1998 (see Valencia [2002] for a fuller discussion). Regarding the underrepresentation of Latino students, Valencia also presented regional level data of gifted Latino students for the 5 Southwestern states (Arizona; California; Colorado; New Mexico; Texas), based on the 2001 OCR survey data. In all 5 states, the observed disparities demonstrate a clear pattern of underrepresentation for Latinos and overrepresentation for White students.

The most recent U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights survey data for 2000 (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2004; hereafter the 2004 OCR survey) is now currently available. Using Valencia and Suzuki's (2001) methodology (described above), I conducted another disparity analysis for the 50 states and the nation as a whole with the 2004 OCR survey data. As expected, the pattern of under- and overrepresentation across racial/ethnic groups is consistent with OCR survey data from 1994 and 1998. These data are presented in Table 2.6 (next page).

As seen in Table 2.6, in 2000, Latinos and African Americans were *underrepresented* in gifted programs for all 10 states with the largest combined minority school enrollment. Furthermore, Latinos and African Americans were underrepresented nationally — 40.9% and 51.6%, respectively. Whites, conversely, were overrepresented in all 10 states with the largest combined minority enrollments and the nation as a whole. Analyzing disparities for every state in the U.S., based on the 2004 OCR survey data, revealed the same disturbing pattern: In only one state were Latinos and African Americans overrepresented in gifted programs (for Latinos, the state was Louisiana; for African Americans, Vermont). By contrast, White students were overrepresented in gifted programs at the national level and in all but 2 states in the nation (Tennessee and North Dakota).[6] Regarding the underrepresentation of Latino students, based on the 2004 OCR survey data, I also conducted an analysis of the 5 Southwestern states, the residence of the vast majority of Latino students. As observed in Valencia et al. (2002), Latinos were underrepresented and White students were overrepresented in gifted programs in all 5 Southwestern states. Looking specifically at Texas, the same patterns of over- and

Table 2.6

Disparity Analysis for Gifted and Talented For Nation and 10 States with Largest Combined Minority Enrollment (K-12): 2000

State	White			African American			Hispanic			American Indian			Asian/Pacific Islander		
	Enroll-ment[a] (%)	Gifted/ Talented[b] (%)	Dis-parity[c] (%)	Enroll-ment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Dis-Parity (%)	Enroll-ment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Dis-Parity (%)	Enroll-ment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Dis-parity (%)	Enroll-ment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Dis-parity (%)
Nation	61.6	74.2	+20.6	17.0	8.2	-51.6	16.1	9.5	-40.9	1.2	0.9	-21.6	4.1	7.1	+71.0
1. California	36.3	53.3	+46.8	8.5	4.3	-49.8	43.3	21.7	-49.8	0.9	0.6	-26.7	11.0	20.1	+82.0
2. Texas	43.1	57.2	+32.8	14.2	10.0	-30.1	39.7	27.6	-30.5	0.3	0.3	-13.8	2.7	5.0	+85.9
3. New York	55.2	69.0	+25.0	19.9	10.5	-47.5	18.5	10.0	-45.8	0.4	0.2	-50.0	6.0	10.3	+72.4
4. Florida	53.8	68.3	+26.8	24.8	10.4	-57.9	19.2	16.8	-12.5	0.3	0.3	+18.5	1.9	4.2	+122.5
5. Illinois	60.0	80.1	+33.5	21.4	7.8	-63.6	15.1	6.4	-57.5	0.2	0.1	-38.9	3.3	5.6	+67.6
6. Georgia	54.0	79.9	+48.1	38.8	14.7	-62.2	4.8	1.2	-75.7	0.2	0.1	-37.5	2.3	4.2	+82.9
7. New Jersey	60.8	74.6	+22.7	17.4	8.5	-51.3	15.3	7.7	-49.8	0.2	0.1	-55.6	6.3	9.2	+45.5
8. North Carolina	61.4	85.3	+38.9	30.6	10.3	-66.2	4.6	1.2	-74.0	1.5	0.6	-62.4	1.9	2.6	+38.9
9. Michigan	74.1	83.8	+13.0	19.6	9.1	-53.5	3.4	2.4	-28.9	1.0	0.5	-55.3	1.8	4.2	+129.5
10. Arizona	52.4	73.1	+39.5	4.6	2.7	-41.3	34.5	15.8	-54.3	6.5	3.6	-45.0	2.1	4.9	+139.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2004).

[a]Percentage enrollment = percentage of racial/ethnic group to total K-12 enrollment.

[b]Percentage gifted/talented = percentage of racial/ethnic group in gifted/talented category.

[c]In the percentage disparity category, a plus sign (+) indicates overrepresentation percentage and a minus sign (-) indicates underrepresentation percentage.

underrepresentation are present. White students were overrepresented in gifted programs in Texas at a rate of 32.8%, while Latinos and African Americans were underrepresented at nearly identical rates of 30.1% and 30.5%, respectively.

In order to get a better sense of underrepresentation of Mexican Americans and other Latinos in gifted programs, Valencia et al. (2002) examined incidence data from the 2 largest districts in each of the 5 Southwestern states to ascertain whether these broad national and regional underrepresentation patterns hold on a more localized level.[7] Valencia et al. calculated disparities for each racial/ethnic group based on the 2001 OCR survey data in the same manner as did Valencia (2002). For Latino students (overwhelmingly Mexican American), Valencia et al. demonstrated that Latinos are *underrepresented* in each of the 10 districts, showing discernible patterns across the 10 districts for Latinos and other racial/ethnic groups. White students, by contrast, are *overrepresented* in all 10 districts.

I replicated the analysis by Valencia et al. (2002) for the 2 largest districts in the 5 Southwestern states, using the 2004 OCR survey data. These data are presented in Table 2.7 (next page). The patterns of under- and overrepresentation for Latino, African, and White students seen in the 2004 OCR survey are consistent with the 1998 OCR data. For Latino students (overwhelmingly Mexican American), Latinos are *underrepresented* in each of the 10 districts, showing discernible patterns across the 10 districts for Latinos and other racial/ethnic groups. These disparities ranged a high underrepresentation rate (77.2%) in Scottsdale (Arizona) Unified School District, to a low underrepresentation rate (15.6%) in Dallas (Texas) Independent School District. Likewise, African

Table 2.7

Disparity Analysis for Gifted/Talented in Largest Two Districts in Each of the Five Southwestern States (K-12): 2000

State	White			Latino			African American			Asian/Pacific Islander			American Indian		
	Enrollment[a] (%)	Gifted/ Talented[b] (%)	Disparity[c] (%)	Enrollment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Disparity (%)	Enrollment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Disparity (%)	Enrollment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Disparity (%)	Enrollment (%)	Gifted/ Talented (%)	Disparity (%)
ARIZONA															
Tucson USD															
(*N* = 61,355)	41.4	50.9	+22.9	45.5	35.6	-21.6	6.6	5.2	-22.2	2.6	5.2	+100.4	3.9	3.2	-18.9
Scottsdale USD															
(*N* = 25,155)	83.9	92.7	+10.5	10.2	2.3	-77.2	2.1	0.7	-69.1	2.7	4.0	+47.2	1.1	0.3	-68.5
CALIFORNIA															
Los Angeles USD															
(*N* = 719,695)	9.8	29.9	+204.2	70.9	41.7	-41.2	12.7	8.7	-31.2	6.3	19.2	+204.4	0.3	0.5	+74.8
San Diego USD															
(*N* = 142,105)	27.1	44.7	+64.8	38.4	20.6	-46.3	16.1	7.8	-51.6	17.8	26.0	+46.0	0.6	0.9	+51.4
COLORADO															
Jefferson CPS															
(*N* = 86,225)	82.6	89.0	+7.9	12.0	3.1	-74.3	1.4	1.0	-27.1	3.2	6.5	+102.2	0.8	0.3	-59.3
Denver CPS															
(*N* = 67,545)	22.2	43.3	+95.3	52.8	34.1	-35.4	20.5	16.6	-19.0	3.3	4.7	+44.0	1.3	1.3	+3.3
NEW MEXICO															
Albuquerque PS															
(*N* = 84,410)	39.9	67.9	+70.1	49.6	24.3	-50.9	3.8	1.9	-49.8	2.1	1.9	-8.0	4.6	4.0	-13.5
Las Cruces PS															
(*N* = 21,905)	30.3	61.0	+101.3	65.7	34.2	-47.9	2.2	1.6	-27.1	1.0	2.6	+154.5	0.8	0.6	-22.2
TEXAS															
Houston ISD															
(*N* = 197,005)	10.4	35.2	+237.5	54.2	30.0	-44.7	32.3	24.8	-23.3	3.0	9.9	+233.7	0.1	0.1	+110.8
Dallas ISD															
(*N* = 154,645)	8.0	13.6	+71.1	54.0	45.6	-15.6	36.2	37.7	4.2	1.4	2.6	+86.2	0.4	0.4	+15.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2004).

Note. *N* = Total district enrollment; USD = Unified School District; CPS = County Public Schools; PS = Public Schools; ISD = Independent School District.

[a]Percentage enrollment = Percentage of racial/ethnic group in total K-12 enrollment. [b]Percentage gifted/talented = Percentage of racial/ethnic group in gifted/talented category. [c]In the percentage disparity category, a plus sign (+) indicates overrepresentation percentage and a minus sign (-) indicates underrepresentation percentage.

Americans were underrepresented in 9 of the 10 districts, ranging from a high underrepresentation rate of 69.1% (Scottsdale Unified School District) to a low rate of 19.0% underrepresentation (Denver Public Schools). Interestingly, Dallas Independent School District is the one departure from this pattern, with African Americans *overrepresented* in Dallas by 2.4%. White students, by contrast, are *overrepresented* in all 10 districts, ranging from an exceptionally high overrepresentation rate of 237.5% in Los Angeles (California) Unified School District to a low overrepresentation rate (7.9%) in Jefferson County (Colorado) Public Schools.[8]

Another type of disparity analysis involves an examination at the school-by-school level within a single district.[9] Using 2001 OCR survey data, Valencia et al. (2002) investigated the Austin Independent School District (AISD) as a case in point. For the analysis, Valencia et al. replicated the analysis performed by Valencia and Suzuki (2001, pp. 232-234, Table 8.4), comparing the 10 schools with the highest percentages of gifted students enrolled to the 10 schools with the lowest percentages of such students. These data are shown in Table 2.8 (next page). The pattern of percentages for gifted students presented in Table 2.8 is highly discernible: Students attending high-enrollment White schools (i.e., 70% or greater White students) are far more likely to be identified as gifted than are students who attend high-enrollment minority schools (i.e., 70% or greater combined minority students). For the top 10 schools (8 of which are predominantly White), 878 of the 6,644 students were identified as gifted — an incidence rate of 13.2%. By sharp contrast, of the 6,136 students enrolled in the bottom 10 schools in percentage of gifted students (*all* 10 were predominantly minority enrollment), only a scant 100

students were identified as gifted, a paltry 1.6% incidence rate. Comparing their results to those reported by Valencia and Suzuki from 1994 data, Valencia et al. noted some striking similarities. The authors also commented that although AISD's high-enrollment minority schools identified *more* gifted students in 1998 ($N = 100$) in the bottom 10

Table 2.8
Disparity Analysis for Gifted/Talented in AISD Elementary Schools: 1998

School	Number of students	Number of gifted/talented students	Percentage of gifted/talented students	Percentage minority enrollment in school
1. Casis	733	146	19.9	22.5
2. Barton Hills	421	81	19.2	23.8
3. Patton	849	137	16.1	26.1
4. Maplewood	359	45	12.5	73.8
5. Davis	716	85	11.9	23.7
6. Zilker	402	46	11.4	46.5
7. Kiker	1149	125	10.9	23.1
8. Hill	802	86	10.7	19.0
9. Lee	396	42	10.6	20.7
10. Oak Hill	817	85	10.4	23.3
Total:	6,644	878	13.2	
58. Linder	602	15	2.5	85.4
59. Andrews	716	17	2.4	95.9
60. Galindo	654	14	2.1	84.3
61. Govalle	502	10	2.0	98.4
62. Houston	921	17	1.8	94.0
63. Odom	688	12	1.7	70.5
64. Brown	503	7	1.4	90.9
65. Oak Springs	323	4	1.2	98.8
66. Norman	453	2	0.4	97.4
67. Harris	774	2	0.3	95.7
Total:	6,136	100	1.6	

Source: Valencia et al. (2002, p. 344).

schools than in 1994 ($N = 18$; see Valencia & Suzuki, p. 223, Table 8.4), students in high-enrollment minority schools were *still* considerably less likely to be identified as gifted. Quoting Valencia and Suzuki, Valencia et al. commented:

> First, why are so few students in predominantly minority schools in the AISD identified as gifted/talented? Second, why are some predominantly minority schools in the AISD (e.g., Maplewood [in the top 10 in both 1994 and 1998 in the

identification of the gifted]) more successful in identifying gifted/talented students than are other very high-minority enrollment schools… [e.g., Norman, which was in the bottom 10 in 1994 and 1998 in the identification of the gifted]? Intensive research is needed to see whether the pattern of disparities in the AISD also holds for other multiracial/ethnic districts in Texas. (p. 233)

To examine if this pattern of gifted percentage rates has continued, I conducted another analysis of AISD's elementary schools using the most recent enrollment data (Texas Education Agency, 2003). These data are presented in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9
Disparity Analysis for Gifted/Talented in AISD Elementary Schools: 2003

School	Number of students	Number of gifted/talented students	Percentage of gifted/talented students	Percentage minority enrollment in school
1. Barton Hills	320	66	20.6	21.6
2. Doss	662	93	14.0	25.8
3. Ridgetop	211	27	12.8	94.3
4. Lee	366	45	12.3	31.7
5. Patton	825	92	11.2	34.9
6. Casis	642	65	10.1	16.4
7. Bryker Woods	369	37	10.0	23.3
8. Zilker	504	49	9.7	53.2
9. Gullett	435	42	9.7	20.7
10. Williams	617	57	9.2	72.8
Total:	4,951	573	11.6	
65. Linder	834	11	1.3	94.1
66. Winn	668	8	1.2	97.2
67. Pleasant Hill	513	6	1.2	86.4
68. Becker	258	3	1.2	95.0
69. Andrews	607	7	1.2	96.5
70. Barrington	707	8	1.1	93.4
71. Harris	600	6	1.0	97.5
72. Langford	864	7	0.8	91.6
73. Sims	321	2	0.6	98.1
74. Pickle	598	2	0.3	99.3
Total:	5,970	60	1.0	

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

Regarding the 10 schools with the highest gifted percentages (7 schools were predominantly White), 573 of the total enrollment of 4,951 students were identified as gifted, for an incidence rate of 11.6% for the top 10 schools in AISD.

By sharp contrast, the 10 schools with the lowest gifted percentages (all 10 were predominantly minority schools — 70% minority or greater), 60 of the 5,970 students enrolled in these schools were identified as gifted — an incidence rate of only 1.0%. As noted by Valencia and Suzuki (2001), and Valencia et al. (2002), one must ask why so few students are identified as gifted in high-enrollment minority schools? Moreover, why are some predominantly minority schools (e.g., Ridgetop) more successful in identifying gifted minority children than other predominantly minority schools (e.g., Linder)?

Given the data presented at the national, regional, state, and district level, it is pointedly clear that racial/ethnic minorities are overwhelmingly underrepresented in gifted programs across the nation. This secondary level of neglect does not bode well for the prospects of identifying gifted ELs, which I turn to next.

Underrepresentation of Gifted ELs

To illustrate the severe neglect of the gifted EL population, Valencia et al. (2002) examined disparities between the percentage of students identified ELs in the general school population and their percentage in the gifted population. As examples, Valencia et al. examined 2001 OCR survey data for two cities, El Paso, Texas and Denver, Colorado. In 1998, 31.5% of the El Paso Independent School District's total enrollment

was classified as EL; the percentage of ELs in gifted programs, however, was only 6.8%, a disparity of 78.4% underrepresentation. For Denver County Schools, ELs accounted for 21.9% of the district's total enrollment, but were only 5.9% of the gifted population — a disparity of 73.1% underrepresentation.

This pattern of underrepresentation of gifted ELs has not abated. Based on the 2004 OCR survey, I investigated the AISD. In 2000, EL students accounted for 15.9% (n = 12,065) of AISD's 75,880 elementary and secondary students. For the gifted program, however, EL students accounted for only 2.9% — a disparity of 82.0% underrepresentation. Given the pattern of disparities in AISD, it is clear that gifted ELs are highly underrepresented in gifted programs, illustrating the tertiary level of neglect.

In sum, there is considerable evidence that gifted children in general are a severely neglected population, as evidenced by the relatively miniscule scholarly attention and budgetary allocations paid by researchers and educational policymakers alike. The severity of neglect experienced by gifted children in general, pales in comparison to the neglect experienced by gifted minorities and gifted ELs. At all levels — national, regional, state, and district — racial/ethnic minorities and ELs experience severe underrepresentation in programs for the gifted. Moreover, this underrepresentation of gifted minorities and ELs is consistent with, and very likely mirrors the scarcity of scholarly literature on gifted minorities and ELs. There have been, however, some advances in promoting opportunities for racial/ethnic minorities and ELs to be identified and placed in programs for the gifted, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Notes

[1]Following the line of thinking of Valencia and Suzuki (2001), I, too, use the omnibus term "gifted," rather than the more common term, "gifted and talented," in this dissertation. Valencia and Suzuki offer this distinction:

> When children perform at superior levels on scholastic-type skills (e.g., verbal abilities) as measured by intelligence tests, they are typically called "gifted." Children who demonstrate exceptional ability (e.g., in music or in the visual arts) are described as "talented." We are in agreement with Winner (1996, pp. 7-8) who commented, "Two different labels suggest two different classes of children. But there is no justification for such a distinction. Artistically or athletically gifted children are not so different from academically gifted children." (p. 208)

[2]Galton's hereditarian perspective was the *Zeitgeist* of the time, and held enormous sway in academic and scientific circles. As discussed by Valencia (1997), Galton's premise, however, failed to consider the possibility of a social explanation — eminent persons attained their status via social inheritance in the highly socially stratified environment of Victorian England. Furthermore, Valencia wrote that hereditarianism as an ideology remained quite entrenched in academic and scientific circles until the 1930s, and had enormous impact on the psychological testing movement in Europe and the U.S. See Valencia for a fuller discussion of the rise of hereditarianism in psychology in the U.S.

[3]In the electronic search of the *PA* database, I used the term "adolescent" instead of "youth," as this term is a broader descriptor for that database.

[4]The following two paragraphs are excerpted, with modifications, from Valencia et al. (2002, p. 285).

[5]See Notes 33 and 34 in Valencia and Suzuki (2001, pp. 318-319), for a listing of some of these studies that documented the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs.

[6]Table 2.6 also presents data for the two other racial/ethnic groups. Asian/Pacific Islanders are *overrepresented* in the nation and all 10 states, while American Indians were *underrepresented* in the nation and 9 of the top 10 states in combined minority enrollment. Regarding the representation rates of Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indians in the 50 states, there is a similar pattern of over- and underrepresentation for these two groups. Asian/Pacific Islanders are overrepresented in *all* but 6 of the 50 states: Alaska, Hawaii, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin. By stark contrast, American Indians are underrepresented in *all* but 3 of the 50 states: Florida, Iowa, and North Dakota.

[7]The following paragraph is excerpted, with modifications, from Valencia et al. (2002, p. 280).

[8]Table 2.7 also presents data for the two other racial/ethnic groups. Asian/Pacific Islanders are *overrepresented* in all but 1 district (i.e., Albuquerque, New Mexico). This pattern of overrepresentation for Asian/Pacific Islanders is consistent with national data presented in Note 6 above. American Indians, however, are evenly split among the 10 districts with a mixed pattern of under- and overrepresentation. Contrary to the mixed pattern of under- and overrepresentation reported here, American Indians are consistently underrepresented at high rates in gifted programs in the nation as a whole and in 47 of the 50 states (see Note 6 above).

[9]The following paragraph is excerpted, with modifications, from Valencia et al. (2002, pp. 280-281).

Chapter 3

The "Ideal" Identification of Gifted ELs

Despite the rather bleak picture concerning the plight of gifted ELs, there are some bright spots that show promise to ameliorate the situation. There has been research that has focused on barriers to the identification and placement of gifted minorities, and some innovative strategies to increase their numbers in programs for the gifted (see Valencia & Suzuki, 2001, chapter 8, for a review of a number of these studies). Furthermore, scholarly interest in gifted ELs in particular is growing (Bernal, 1998; Castellano, 2003; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Riojas Clark & González, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1998). From this body of research, specific "best practices" have been identified that could lead to increased representation of racial/ethnic minorities (both English-speaking and EL) in gifted programs (Frasier, 1987; Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Valencia & Villarreal, 2001; Valencia, Villarreal, & Salinas, 2002).

The major purpose of this dissertation is to investigate what factors contribute to the successful identification and placement of Mexican American (and other Latino) ELs in gifted programs. To accomplish this, I examined the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS; Texas Education Agency, 2003) database for the Austin Independent School District (AISD) to identify AISD elementary schools that have (a) predominantly Latino enrollments and (b) comparatively larger numbers of gifted EL Latinos than other AISD elementary schools. From my initial analysis, I identified four

AISD elementary schools that met the criteria for participation in my study. The principals of two of these identified schools, however, declined to allow me access to conduct research on their campuses. As such, I concentrated my investigation on the two schools that the principals allowed me to conduct my research on their campuses. From the data collected on these campuses, it is clear that these two AISD elementary schools are doing something right, but one must ask the question: What is working that facilitates the identification and placement of EL Latino children in gifted programs in these schools? Based upon the research on gifted minorities, of which gifted ELs are a growing subpopulation, my reasoning for this research concern falls along these lines:

1) Historically, giftedness has been viewed very narrowly. That is, performance on a measure of intelligence, typically 2 standard deviations above the normative mean of 100 has been the conventional procedure. This process has created an exclusionary paradigm.
2) Racial/ethnic minorities (on average) do not perform as well as their White peers on intelligence tests traditionally used to identify gifted children.
3) Broader models of giftedness may allow for inclusion of more minorities, but such procedures may still require a strong command of English.
4) Given that ELs are unlikely to perform at superior levels on English-language intelligence tests whose content may not reflect their experiences, ELs are even less likely to be identified as gifted.
5) Despite the aforementioned obstacles, some schools have successfully identified gifted EL Latinos at high rates.

There has been research that has proposed general principles and processes that may serve to increase the representation of minorities in programs for the gifted. These ideas serve as a good starting point to investigate the specific practices that schools may employ to identify greater numbers of EL Latinos as gifted. This chapter has two parts. First, I discuss the theoretical framework developed from Frasier's (1987) list of best-case practices, and an additional principle offered by Valencia & Suzuki (2001) that delineates this ideal process. Second, I provide an operational model of Frasier's framework that is utilized to conduct the investigation.

Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Model

Frasier (1987) provided a list of nine principles that exemplify the "best practices" to increase the representation of racial/ethnic minorities in gifted programs. As Valencia and Suzuki (2001) noted, Frasier's list focused on African American students. Valencia and Suzuki comment, and I concur, that Frasier's list can be generalized to other students of color. Furthermore, I assert that Frasier's ideas have promise in increasing the identification of ELs. These ideas are as follows:

1. The focus should be on the diversity within gifted populations.
2. The goal should be inclusion, rather than exclusion, of students.
3. Data should be gathered from multiple sources; a single criterion of giftedness should be avoided.
4. Both objective and subjective data should be collected.

5. Professionals and nonprofessionals who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved.
6. Identification of giftedness should occur as early as possible, should consist of a series of steps, and should be continuous.
7. Special attention should be given to the different ways in which children from different cultures manifest behavioral indicators of giftedness.
8. Decisionmaking should be delayed until *all* pertinent data on a student have been reviewed [italics added].
9. Data collected during the identification process should be used in determining curriculum. (p. 156)[1]

In addition to the 9 principles in Frasier's list, Valencia and Suzuki offered a tenth principle — the role of parental involvement (e.g., parent nomination; participation in the assessment process; school involvement). Here, parental involvement goes beyond parents' knowledge of giftedness and availability of programs in their children's schools. These 10 principles form the basis for developing a theoretical framework in my dissertation.

Closely examining the above 10 principles, I developed a theoretical framework via content analysis.[2] I concluded that these principles appear to fall into three broad factors, "Structural," "Assessment," and "Sociocultural" factors. Based on my content analysis, I placed the 10 principles in the three factors listed in Table 3.1.

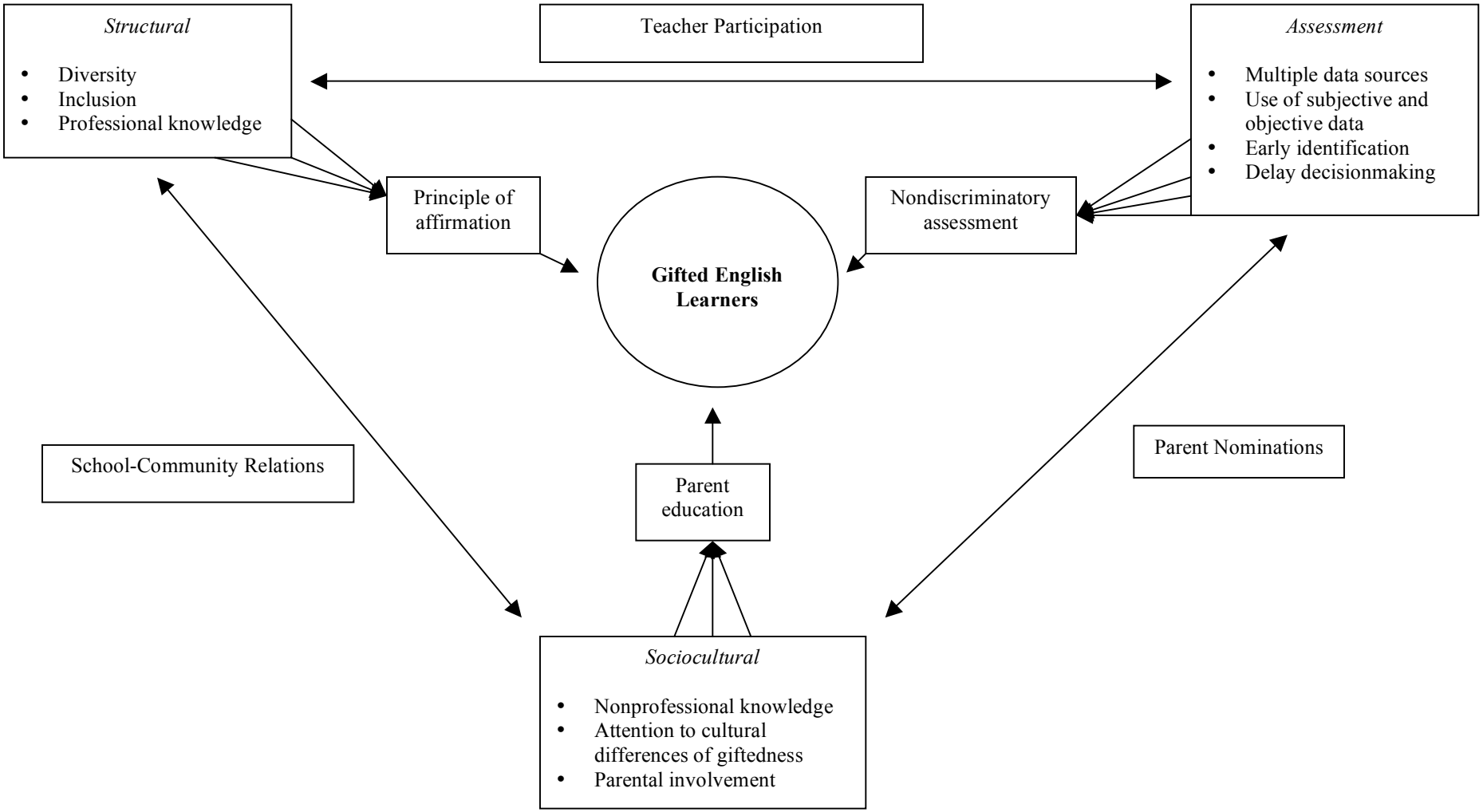
Table 3.1
Theoretical Framework

Structural	Assessment	Sociocultural
1. "The focus should be on the diversity within gifted populations."	1. "Data should be gathered from multiple sources; a single criterion of giftedness should be avoided."	1. "…[N]onprofessionals who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved."[3]
2. "The goal should be inclusion, rather than exclusion, of students."	2. "Both objective and subjective data should be collected."	2. "Special attention should be given to the different ways in which children from different cultures manifest behavioral indicators of giftedness."
3. "Professionals… who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved."	3. "Identification of giftedness should occur as early as possible, should consist of a series of steps, and should be continuous."	3. "Inclusion of parents in the assessment process."
	4. "Decisionmaking should be delayed until *all* pertinent data on a student have been reviewed."	

Source: Frasier's (1987) list of best identification practices and Valencia and Suzuki's (2001) 10th principle.

From this table, and drawing upon Bernal (1976), Barkan and Bernal (1991), Valencia and Suzuki (2001), Valencia and Villarreal (2001), and Valencia et al. (2002), I proposed a conceptual model that will be utilized for my investigation. This conceptual model is graphically represented in Figure 3.1 (next page). Each factor, "Structural," "Assessment," and "Sociocultural," contributes to the identification of gifted ELs. It is also apparent that this theoretical framework entails more than just these three factors. Included in this framework are the interactions between the various factors (e.g., "School-Community Relations" to illustrate the interaction of Structural and Sociocultural factors), and each factor's effect on gifted EL Latinos. For the remainder of this chapter, I provide a fuller discussion and empirical support for each factor.

Figure 3.1
Conceptual Model of "Ideal" Gifted Program



Structural Factor

In Figure 3.1, the first factor listed is the Structural factor. I define this factor in terms of the ways in which the systems in a school are organized that can enhance or discourage the identification of gifted EL Latinos. These features involve not only school policies, but also the people who develop and implement these policies — principals and teachers. For example, principals' knowledge and philosophies about giftedness and gifted EL Latinos will shape the commitment (or lack thereof) they have towards gifted programs and affect the policies they develop. Drawing from principals' leadership, teachers' commitment to gifted EL Latinos will also be affected by their own knowledge and beliefs. The Structural factor contains three principles that encompass policy-oriented goals.

Diversity. The first principle of the Structural factor listed in Figure 3.1, the principle of diversity, embraces the notion that any child could be gifted, regardless of factors such as race/ethnicity, language status, or home environment. Valencia and Suzuki (2001) cogently captured this notion as the "principle of affirmation" for the gifted minority child. Although Valencia and Suzuki's principle of affirmation is directed to gifted minority students in general, it has great relevance for the target population of this dissertation — EL Latinos. Passow and Frasier (1996) noted that "No culture or population has a monopoly on any talent potential, whatever its nature" (p. 199). Principals and teachers that embrace the notion of diversity must necessarily affirm that gifted ELs *do* exist.

Inclusion. The second principle in the Structural factor, the goal of inclusion, goes beyond the idea of affirmation to a call to action. Barkan and Bernal's (1991) recommendations for innovative practices and procedures to identify and include EL children in gifted programs illustrate that gifted ELs can be identified.

Goertz, Phemister, and Bernal (1996) evaluated the "New Challenge" program based at the University of Texas – Pan American. In their evaluation, the authors noted the commitment to the program by school personnel — that is, the program director, coordinator, and teachers — were central to the success of the program for primarily Mexican American and economically disadvantaged students.

Ford, Grantham, and Harris (1997) stressed the importance of multicultural education in gifted programs and the need for administrators and teachers to give greater attention to multicultural concerns for gifted minorities. Although Ford et al. dealt primarily with curricular concerns, their research applies to the notion of inclusion in the identification of gifted ELs. Multicultural perspectives underscore the very notion of inclusion, and "philosophical changes can be implemented more effectively when school personnel are trained to be more culturally aware and competent" (p. 77).

Professional knowledge. The third principle in the Structural factor, the involvement of professionals knowledgeable about the behavioral characteristics of giftedness, also has consistent support from the literature. Fernández, Gay, Lucky, and Gavilán (1998) examined differences in African American, White, and Hispanic teachers' perceptions between gifted students and gifted ELs.[4] Participants responded to a Likert-type survey instrument, where they were asked to list and rank characteristics they

believed to be associated with either gifted students or gifted ELs. Based on an ANOVA, the authors reported no differences by race/ethnicity of teachers and gifted/gifted EL, but they did find significant differences in the relative importance of language-related items with gifted ELs. The authors noted that teachers ranked language abilities, such as "has a large vocabulary" or "expresses himself/herself well orally" higher in importance for gifted children in general, but less important for gifted ELs. Fernández et al. concluded that teachers had significantly different perceptions of gifted students and gifted ELs.

Hunsaker, Finley, and Frank (1997), in their predictive validity study of behavioral measures of giftedness, found that classroom teachers, when properly trained to recognize the behavioral characteristics of gifted children, were able to predict children's success on some aspects of gifted programs. Although Hunsaker et al. did not specifically deal with gifted ELs, their results have important applications concerning teacher training and assessment of gifted ELs.

Woods and Achey's (1990) study of an innovative project in Greensboro, North Carolina also demonstrated the effectiveness of a number of alternatives to traditional identification procedures. Woods and Achey employed alternative procedures such as a review of all students to identify a "target group" of potentially gifted students, automatic evaluation of all eligible students, and two full-time educational diagnosticians devoted specifically to the gifted project. These alternative procedures resulted in a significant increase in the percentage of gifted minorities. Although Woods and Achey did not involve ELs in their study, the dramatic results has significant applications for ELs

concerning the benefits of employing highly qualified personnel in the identification and evaluation process.

In sum, given the results of these studies, it is clear that professional training in gifted education and awareness of the cultural variations that may exist among gifted racial/ethnic minority children may serve to promote the successful identification giftedness in these underrepresented groups. Regarding ELs, such innovations may likewise serve to increase identification of gifted students from this severely neglected group.

Assessment Factor

The second factor listed in Figure 3.1 is the Assessment factor. The Assessment factor encompasses the process by which children are evaluated for eligibility in gifted programs. This factor includes factors such as the philosophies and training of assessment personnel, the instrumentation used to evaluate children, and the implementation of nondiscriminatory assessment practices for ELs. The Assessment factor consists of four principles that reflect the general principles of nondiscriminatory assessment, such as recommendations for multiple sources of data, and avoidance of the use of single scores (e.g., IQ scores) to determine eligibility.

Multiple data sources. The first principle, the use of multiple data sources and avoidance of reliance on single scores to identify giftedness is strongly supported in the literature.

Matthew, Golin, Moore, and Baker (1992) demonstrated the effectiveness of the System of Multicultural and Pluralistic Assessment (SOMPA; Mercer & Lewis, 1979) to increase the number of African American children identified as gifted. The SOMPA includes a number of sociocultural scales to adjust intelligence test scores. Participants were drawn from 270 African American students in grades 2-5 identified as gifted in a large urban school district in Pennsylvania; 215 students were identified using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Revised (WISC-R; Wechsler, 1974), and 55 were identified using the SOMPA. The authors, testing group mean differences using *t*-tests, found no significant differences between the non-SOMPA and SOMPA groups. As such, Matthew et al. concluded that students identified using the SOMPA were extremely similar to students identified through traditional means.

Ortiz and Volloff (1987) examined a number of standardized tests to determine which tests would be appropriate for use in identifying gifted Hispanic students. In their investigation, 65 Hispanic students (most likely Mexican American) were referred for evaluation for placement in the gifted program in four different districts in the Fresno County, California area. The authors administered six instruments: (a) the WISC-R, (b) the Otis-Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT; Otis & Lennon, 1982); (c) the Test of Divergent Thinking (TDT; Williams, 1980); (d) the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI; Battle, 1981); (e) the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS; McGraw-Hill, 1982); (f) the California Achievement Test (CAT; McGraw-Hill, 1977). Employing a repeated measures one-way ANOVA design, Ortiz and Volloff found that if the traditional 130+ IQ cut score were used, the WISC-R, particularly the Performance IQ

and the Full Scale IQ, identified more of the Hispanic children as gifted (32% and 23%, respectively), than scores on the group-administered tests such as the OLSAT (0%), and CTBS/CAT (Math Composite, 8%; Language Composite, 6%; Reading Composite, 2%). The WISC-R also identified more participants in the study as gifted than the TDT (5%). This finding the authors noted, was surprising, given that the TDT is often cited as a possible alternative for identifying gifted minorities. Although Ortiz and Volloff acknowledged that individually administered tests (such as the WISC-R) were more appropriate in identifying gifted minority children, they cautioned that using IQ scores as a single indicator of giftedness would be inappropriate.

Mills and Tissot (1995) examined the usefulness of the Raven's Advanced Progressive Matrices (Raven, Court, & Raven, 1983) as an alternative instrument to traditional measures to identify gifted students. The participants included all 347 ninth-grade students, ages 13 to 18 years, in English classes in an urban high school in New York State. Broken down by race/ethnicity, the sample consisted of 154 Hispanics (45%; most likely Puerto Ricans), 95 Whites (28%), 83 African Americans (24%), and 12 Asians (3%). Within this sample were 67 students classified as ESL students (21%), 28 students were in special education classes (8%), and 47 qualified for free or reduced lunch (13.5%). Participants were administered the Raven and the School and College Ability Tests (SCAT; Educational Testing Service, 1980), a test of verbal and quantitative reasoning (similar to the SAT) developed by the Educational Testing Service. Mills and Tissot found that, based on ANOVAs, the SCAT did not appear to identify gifted minorities effectively. The Raven, however, appeared to be useful as a

screening measure to identify gifted minorities. In addition, the authors noted that the Raven could be very effective in identifying gifted ELs, but cautioned that reliance *solely* on the Raven was unsound practice.

Use of subjective and objective data. The second principle in the Assessment factor listed in Figure 3.1, the use of subjective and objective data, has strong empirical support.

Elliott, Argulewicz, and Turco (1986) investigated the validity of using the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS; Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, & Hartman, 1976) to identify gifted minority students. The sample consisted of 23 gifted Hispanic (most likely Mexican American) and 379 White students in grades 3 through 6 in a large suburban school district in the Southwest. Elliott et al. conducted stepwise regression analyses, using the SRBCSS as the predictor variable and the WISC-R or Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale Form L-M (Terman & Merrill, 1973), and the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT; Madden, Gardner, Rudman, Karlsen, & Merwin, 1974) as criterion variables. The authors found that while the SRBCSS appeared to have limited utility for predicting *White* students' performances on intelligence or achievement measures, they found that the SRBCSS could have some value in identifying gifted Hispanic students.

Maker (1996) offered a promising solution to increase the number of minority children identified as gifted, basing her model on an emerging paradigm by Feldman (1991; cited in Maker). According to Maker, Feldman posited that a paradigm shift is occurring in the field of gifted education, a move away from the traditional model of

giftedness that is unidimensional, ethnocentric, and elitist, and toward a more inclusive model of giftedness that is based on the notion of multiple forms of giftedness, diversity, and excellence. In her model, Maker developed an identification process, called DISCOVER, that was characterized as developmental, process-oriented, and performance-based. A key feature of the process involves the use of observations of children's problem-solving processes and the finished products of their creative labors to make placement decisions. Maker's process, although not specifically designed for ELs, has great potential, as it may allow ELs to demonstrate their abilities in ways that standardized, verbally loaded intelligence tests cannot measure.

Scott, Deuel, Jean-François, and Urbano (1996) developed a cognitive battery to examine its effectiveness to identify giftedness in 400 White, African American, and Hispanic (Cuban American) children enrolled in regular education in the Dade County (Florida) Public Schools. Of the 147 Hispanic children, Scott et al. noted that 21 were tested in Spanish, and 6 in both English and Spanish. The battery developed for the study employed a number of different tasks, including open-ended, unstructured tasks. Using 31 gifted children as a criterion reference sample, Scott et al. found that when compared to the gifted sample, 7 of the 8 children in the top 2% of the 400 children were minority children, and all 8 children outperformed 25 of 33 children in the gifted sample. Although Scott et al. did not report if any of the top 2% were ELs, they conclude that a cognitive battery that employs open-ended tasks and using familiar concepts and vocabulary may prove effective for identifying gifted minority children.

Early identification. The third principle in the Assessment factor listed in Figure 3.1, early, multi-step, and continuous identification, also has empirical support.

Feiring, Louis, Ukeje, Lewis, and Leong (1997) evaluated the screening and assessment procedures of a Newark, New Jersey program to identify gifted inner-city kindergarten students. The authors stated that a major goal of the project was to demonstrate that young potentially gifted children do exist and can be identified, despite a number of early risk factors (e.g., grade retention; dropping out; violent crime). Although the authors did not describe the sample for their study, they stated that all 4,000 incoming kindergarten students were included in the program. Given the racial/ethnic diversity of the greater New York City-Newark metropolitan area, it is likely that EL Latino students were included in the sample.[5] Feiring et al. found that by utilizing early identification and multi-step procedures, the identification rate of gifted kindergarten students increased from .2% to 2%.

Delay decisionmaking. The final principle in the Assessment factor listed in Figure 3.1, delay decisionmaking, speaks to the need to delay a decision until all pertinent information has been collected. This principle also has some empirical support.

Reyes, Fletcher, and Paez (1996) conducted a preliminary evaluation of the identification procedures of a project for identifying gifted rural Mexican American students in the Texas/New Mexico/Mexico border region. Incorporating a number of the principles mentioned previously, Reyes et al. also noted that one objective was to include identification (ID) committees that would assist in the identification process and focus on the cultural contexts of the participating communities. The authors noted that the ID

committees made placement decisions *after* all information had been collected from sources such as behavioral inventories, holistic scoring, and class portfolios to assess students nominated for gifted programs. Although the study was preliminary, Reyes et al. recommended that nontraditional measures were necessary to include underrepresented groups in gifted programs.

Maker (1996) noted in her description of the DISCOVER assessment process that the final step in the assessment process was the compilation of all information from classroom observations. According to Maker, evaluators observe children's problem-solving behaviors and discuss observational data *after* all observations have been completed. From these discussions, evaluators come to a consensus whether a child "definitely," "probably," or "maybe" demonstrates superior problem-solving abilities on novel tasks. All information is then transferred to behavioral checklists. These checklists are derived "from extensive use of the activities with students from varied cultural, economic, and linguistic backgrounds." (p. 46). Given that Maker's model includes student products and processes in the assessment of giftedness, her framework bodes well for the inclusion of ELs in gifted programs.

In sum, innovative assessment procedures show great promise to increase the number of minorities, and especially ELs, identified as gifted. Such innovations might be especially important for ELs, as these may serve to provide more equitable, nondiscriminatory mechanisms to identify and assess gifted ELs. As the empirical literature demonstrates, gifted ELs can be identified if the traditional paradigm of

giftedness — superior performance on intelligence tests — is abandoned, or broadened to accommodate their unique abilities.

Sociocultural Factor

The last factor listed in Figure 3.1, the Sociocultural factor, relates to activities and processes that occur outside the school, particularly in the home and community. Such issues include parents' understanding of what giftedness is, their awareness of the availability of programs in their children's school, and the role they may play in the evaluation of their children for the gifted program. The Sociocultural factor consists of the three principles that incorporate cultural and environmental variables.

Nonprofessional knowledge. The first principle in the Sociocultural factor, the involvement of nonprofessionals knowledgeable about the behavioral characteristics of giftedness, has consistent support from the literature. For example, Strom and Johnson (1990) found similarities and differences between White and Hispanic parents' expectations for supporting gifted children. Based on responses to the Parents As A Teacher Inventory (Strom, 1986), both groups were very similar in accepting children's imagination, allowing fantasy, and recognizing the need of gifted children to interact and play with adults. The authors also listed a number of areas where White and Hispanic parents differed in their expectations, illustrating the "unique strengths of each parent group" (p. 171).

Woods and Achey (1990) incorporated a parent education component in their investigation to increase representation of African American children in gifted programs in

the Greensboro, North Carolina schools. The purpose of this parent education component was to inform parents about giftedness, the availability and content of gifted programs in their children's schools, and the evaluation process for placement in the gifted program. The authors concluded that parental education (by the schools) to inform parents about the availability and purposes of gifted education might be helpful in improving minority parents' participation in the evaluation process.

Scott, Perou, Urbano, Hogan, and Gold (1992) investigated parent perceptions of giftedness among parents of children in gifted programs. Scott et al. utilized a survey mailed to 104 White, 50 African American, and 84 Hispanic (most likely Cuban American) parents of gifted children in the greater Miami, Florida area. Employing a MANOVA design, the authors found that parents, irrespective of race/ethnicity, had very similar perceptions of the characteristics of giftedness, and what characteristics of giftedness they attributed to their own children. Scott et al. also found, however, that African American and Hispanic parents were less likely, however, to nominate their child for the gifted program. The authors commented that parent education programs could serve to enhance the identification of minority children for gifted programs.

Attention to cultural differences of giftedness. The second principle of the Sociocultural factor, attention to cultural differences in the behavioral manifestation of giftedness, has been well documented. Bernal and Reyna (1974; cited in Bernal, 1976), as a case in point, noted that the ethnic communities' views should be taken into account when developing assessment procedures that will include minorities. Bernal (1976) also noted that culturally different societies reinforce different intellectual abilities, thus

assessment practices that do not accommodate these differences may miss many potentially gifted children from these groups. Riojas Clark and González (2001) found that minority *voces* (voices) — that is, community interpretations of cultural and linguistic giftedness — were very important in identifying giftedness. Parents' descriptions (in Spanish) of behaviors they identified as exemplifying giftedness in their children reflect the unique cultural components of the concept of giftedness. The authors commented "minority families can nurture their children's giftedness in a culturally rich manner" (p. 71).

Parental involvement. The third principle in the Sociocultural factor listed in Figure 3.1, is parental involvement. Woods and Achey (1990) included a component in their study that involved parents (primarily African Americans). Woods and Achey found that parental involvement had extremely beneficial effects in increasing the number of African American students identified and placed in gifted programs. As mentioned previously, Scott et al. (1992) posited that parent education programs could help enhance minority enrollment in gifted programs. The authors noted, however, that parent education programs are "a necessary but not sufficient condition for an active role [of parents] in the referral process" (p. 139).

In sum, parents have much to offer schools in successfully identifying gifted minorities. Parents transmit the cultural and linguistic values of their communities to their children, and as such, can provide a wealth of rich information concerning their children's abilities. Parents, once informed about giftedness, can take more active roles in their

children's education, and become stronger partners with schools committed to meet the needs of gifted ELs.

Conclusion

Although gifted ELs may be the neglected of the neglected of the neglected, there are some promising solutions to address this problem (Bernal, 1998; Riojas Clark & González, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1998; Valencia & Villarreal, 2001; Valencia et al., 2002). Frasier (1987) and Valencia and Suzuki (2001) presented a number of guiding principles that characterize "best practices" to develop gifted programs that successfully identify racial/ethnic minorities (both English speaking and English learners). Via content analysis, I proposed three categories that form the basis of a conceptual framework to examine the "ideal" features of programs that can successfully identify high numbers of racial/ethnic minority children.

Utilizing the conceptual framework that I developed to examine the literature base, it is clear that there is research that provides empirical support for each individual principle as a means to increase the representation of minority children (including ELs) in programs for the gifted (Fernández et al. 1998; Goertz et al., 1996; Hunsaker et al., 1997; Matthew et al., 1992; Ortiz & Volloff, 1987). There are also research studies that have investigated innovative new models and programs for increasing minority representation in gifted programs (e.g., Barkan & Bernal, 1991; Maker, 1996; Woods & Achey, 1990).

The results of these studies, in and of themselves, illustrate that gifted minority students do exist, and can be identified. It is the *combination* of all 10 principles, however, and the manifestation of these principles in schools, that bears further scrutiny. Whether these principles exist — in part or in whole — in actual schools, or if a different process takes place that can account for some schools' success is an empirical question. In the next chapter, I present my research design and methodology to examine these factors in two AISD schools that are successfully identifying relatively large numbers of ELs as gifted.

Notes

[1]Frasier's 9th principle, the use of assessment data to develop curriculum, while important, is beyond the scope of this dissertation, and is not included in the conceptual model.

[2]Holsti (1968) defined content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by systematically and *objectively* identifying special characteristics of messages (p. 608; cited in Berg, 2001, p. 240).

[3]Frasier's 5th principle, having professionals and nonprofessionals who are knowledgeable about the behavioral indicators of giftedness involved, is divided between the Structural and Sociocultural categories. I define "professionals" as school personnel with professional training, including principals, teachers, gifted advocates, or assessment personnel. I define "nonprofessionals" as other individuals who may be involved in the evaluation process, including parents, teacher aides, or community or family members.

[4]Fernández et al. (1998) provided neither the location of their study nor the national origin of the Hispanic sample, thus it is not known to which subgroup the Hispanic teachers belonged.

[5]Given that Feiring et al. (1997) conducted their study in northern New Jersey, it is likely that the Hispanic sample was predominantly Puerto Rican.

Chapter 4

Research Design and Methods

In Chapter 2, I examined three evidentiary bases to support the contention that gifted ELs are "the neglected of the neglected of the neglected": (a) the available scholarly literature on giftedness and gifted education; (b) budgetary allocations for gifted programs at state and district levels; (c) demographic incidence data of gifted programs at national, regional, state, and district levels. From reviews of the literature base, research on the gifted, especially gifted minorities, is in very short supply (Valencia & Suzuki, 2001). From a budgetary standpoint, gifted programs have considerably smaller allocations compared to other educational programs. Furthermore, gifted students do not receive the budgetary allocation commensurate to their proportion of the student population at the state and district levels. Regarding incidence data, racial/ethnic minorities, Latinos and African Americans in particular, are vastly underrepresented in gifted programs (Valencia & Suzuki; Valencia & Villarreal, 2001; Valencia, Villarreal, & Salinas, 2002). The neglect of gifted students in general (the *primary* level), as evidenced by these three sources, has repercussions on gifted racial/ethnic minority students (the *secondary* level), who experience greater neglect. This neglect is compounded even further at the *tertiary* level of neglect, as gifted ELs are highly underrepresented in gifted programs, and comparatively little scholarly research involving this population has been conducted.

In the present study, I analyzed the demographic data for the Austin Independent School District (AISD) to provide empirical support for the contention that gifted EL Latinos experience a tertiary level of neglect. From this analysis, however, there are some schools that appear to defy the odds, and identify EL Latino students at rates comparatively higher than other schools in AISD. Therefore, based upon my conceptual model presented in Chapter 3 (see Figure 3.1, p. 45), I investigated the "Structural" and "Assessment" factors that contribute to the successful identification and placement of EL Latino students in gifted programs in two AISD elementary schools. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to explicate the design of my study, including objectives and research questions, and to describe the methods of data collection and analysis.

Design of Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate two aspects of gifted EL Latinos via a combined quantitative and case study approach. First, I examined demographic incidence data from AISD to investigate the assertion that gifted EL Latinos truly experience the tertiary level of neglect. Although the district-level data presented in Chapter 2 illustrate that ELs are underrepresented in gifted programs as a group (Valencia et al., 2002), *EL Latino*s may not *appear* to be more underrepresented in gifted programs than Latino students in general. This may be the case given that (a) not all ELs are Latino, and (b) EL Latinos are also included in the total Latino population. Both these confounds made it necessary, therefore, to disaggregate the total Latino incidence

data into "non-EL Latino" and "EL Latino" components to examine this assertion more fully. Utilizing incidence data obtained from the Public Education Information Management System database (PEIMS; Texas Education Agency, 2003), I calculated disparity percentages for each racial/ethnic group, and EL groups for all 74 AISD elementary schools to examine this first issue.

Based upon the analysis described above, some elementary schools in AISD identify gifted EL Latinos at comparatively higher rates than other schools in the district. As such, the second objective of this study is to examine what processes and/or features are operating in two of these AISD elementary schools that appear to promote the inclusion of ELs in gifted programs. The goal here was to provide empirical support for the Structural and Assessment factors of the conceptual model I developed from Frasier's (1987) list of "best practices" to increase minority representation in gifted programs. To examine these factors, I used a case study approach in order to capture the ethos of these schools that contribute to their success in identifying gifted EL Latino children at comparatively higher rates than other schools.

Research Questions

Two major research questions drive the design and execution of this study:

1. Are gifted EL Latinos truly the neglected of the neglected of the neglected?
2. What structural and assessment factors contribute to the successful identification and placement of EL Latino students in a gifted program?

As described in Chapter 3, I hypothesized that three broad factors (based upon my derivation of Frasier's [1987] list) — Structural, Assessment, and Sociocultural factors — have a strong impact on the success (or lack thereof) of a school's ability to identify gifted EL Latinos and to place them in gifted programs at relatively high rates. The investigation of all three factors, however, is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Therefore, this study focuses on the Structural and Assessment factors of my theoretical model.[1] Two related questions are embedded within this major research concern (see Figure 3.1, p. 45, for graphic representation of the three factors):

1. *Structural factors*: What features of the institutional structures of the school promote and facilitate successful identification of gifted EL Latinos? Structural factors involve the environment of the schools themselves, such as the principal's leadership, knowledge about giftedness, and attitudes toward ELs. Such factors also include teachers' and assessment personnel's attitudes and training. In addition, the relationship between schools and communities are important. Thus, the level of parental and community involvement in the schools may also be relevant.

2. *Assessment factors*: What features of the assessment process used to evaluate ELs promote their successful identification? Assessment factors deal with the evaluation process itself, including such features as nomination procedures, instrumentation, sources of assessment data, and placement decisions. In addition, school policies such as automatic evaluation of all nominated children, and the screening of all children for possible evaluation could represent a strong affirmative stance for inclusion of all potentially gifted children.

Methods

In this section, I delineate the methods I used to investigate the two research questions described in the section above. Given that I employed a combined quantitative and case study approach, I describe the methods for each part of the investigation separately.

Quantitative Analysis

Procedure. To examine the underrepresentation of gifted EL Latinos in AISD elementary schools, I used PEIMS data for the 2002-2003 school year, the most recent data available at the time of writing this chapter (Texas Education Agency, 2003). The PEIMS database provides information for every school campus in the state of Texas, including racial/ethnic information for school enrollments, and the total number of students enrolled in gifted programs. These data were obtained by submitting a written request for data to the AISD Office of Program Evaluation in January, 2003. Enrollment data was obtained for all 74 elementary schools by race/ethnicity, EL status, and gifted placement.

To investigate the racial/ethnic isolation of Latino students, Valencia (2002b) examined the enrollment of AISD as part of an analysis of the 10 largest districts in the five Southwestern states. Valencia reported that in the 2000-2001 school year AISD had 77,862 students enrolled in Early Childhood Education to grade 12, with Latinos representing 47.0% of the district's enrollment (Valencia, 2002b, Table 2.9, p. 61). From Valencia's analysis, it is clear that Latinos constitute a substantial proportion of the AISD

enrollment. Given that the population of primary concern in this dissertation is elementary school gifted EL Latinos, I conducted a similar analysis of the elementary schools (Early Childhood Education to Grade 5) in AISD for the 2002-2003 school year, the time of the most recent data available. These data are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
Austin Independent School District Elementary School Enrollment for Early Childhood Education to Grade 5: 2002-2003

Race/ethnicity	*n*	%
Latino	23,386	55.8
White	11,304	27.0
African American	5,947	14.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,187	2.8
American Indian	113	0.3
Grand Total	41,937	100.1[a]

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).
[a]The percentages for the five racial/ethnic groups do not sum to 100% due to rounding error.

Based upon the AISD enrollment data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, an important point can be discerned — at the elementary school level, Latinos (n = 23,386 students) are the majority group, representing 55.8% of the total enrollment of 41,937 elementary students. The representation of Latino students in gifted programs, however, may not be at a concomitant level, a conjecture I examine later.

1) *Primary level of neglect*. To examine the primary level of neglect (i.e., gifted students in general), I calculated the percent gifted for each of the 74 AISD elementary schools by taking the total number of students reported as enrolled in a gifted program, and dividing by the total number of students enrolled in each school. I then calculated the district average percent gifted by summing all the gifted enrollments and dividing by the sum of the total school enrollments. To analyze the contention that gifted children in general are a neglected population, I examined the percentage of gifted students in each

AISD elementary and the proportion of schools with a percentage above or equal to the AISD district average percentage for elementary schools. My null hypothesis is that if gifted children are not neglected in general, then the number of schools with percent gifted values larger or equal to the district average should be approximately equal to the number of schools with percent gifted values lower than the district average. To test this hypothesis at a confidence level of $\alpha = .05$, I employed a chi-square test. This analysis is summarized as follows:

Given:
H_o: $p = .50$
H_1: $p \neq .50$
$N = 74$ (AISD elementary schools)
X = number of schools with % gifted ≥ district average
$Np = .50$

Event	Obtained Frequency	Expected Frequency	Obtained Proportion	Expected Proportion
% gifted ≥ district average	$f_1 = X$	$m_1 = Np$	$f_1N = P$	p
% gifted < district average	$f_2 = N - f_1$	$m_2 = N(1 - p)$	$f_2N = Q = 1 - P$	$q = 1 - p$

2) *Secondary level of neglect*. To examine the secondary level of neglect (i.e., gifted minority students), I calculated the percentage of the combined Latino, African American, and American Indian student enrollments in the total enrollment. I excluded the Asian/Pacific Islander population from the analysis for two reasons. First, the Asian/Pacific Islander population is very small (2.8%) compared to the Latino and African American populations, and very likely would contribute little to the combined minority percentage. Second, and more importantly, as a group, Asian/Pacific Islanders are typically overrepresented in gifted programs, a sharp departure from the pattern of underrepresentation that holds for the three other racial/ethnic groups (see Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Valencia et al., 2002). My hypothesis regarding the secondary level of

neglect is that there is a strong negative relation between the proportion of racial/ethnic minorities in a school's enrollment and the proportion of the school's enrollment identified as gifted. That is, as the proportion of the racial/ethnic minorities in the school increases, then the proportion of gifted children decreases. To test this hypothesis, I calculated a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between the percent gifted and percent combined enrollment of African American, Latino, and American Indian students to determine the magnitude and direction of the relation.

3) *Tertiary level of neglect*. To examine the tertiary level of underrepresentation (i.e., gifted EL Latinos), it was necessary to distinguish EL from non-EL Latinos. To disaggregate the non-EL and EL Latino populations, I defined the populations in the following manner: Students were included in the EL population if, at the time of data collection, they were officially enrolled in a bilingual education or ESL program. Latino students were designated as non-EL if they were not enrolled in a bilingual education or ESL program at the time of data collection. As such, the non-EL Latino population included two types of Latino students: (a) Latino students whose first language was English and had *never* been enrolled in a bilingual education or ESL program, or (b) Latino students designated as "Language Other Than English" (LOTE). In Texas, the LOTE designation indicates that a student comes from a non English-speaking background. LOTE students, therefore, are bilingual, but demonstrate sufficient English proficiency not to qualify for bilingual placement, or were enrolled in a bilingual education or ESL program *at one time*, but met the exit criteria and are now enrolled in mainstream, English-only classes.

I calculated disparities for the non-EL and EL Latino subpopulations in the 74 AISD elementary schools. I then subtracted the non-EL Latino disparity from the EL Latino disparity to determine which subpopulation was more underrepresented. My null hypothesis is that if gifted EL Latinos do not experience the tertiary level of neglect, then the number of schools where the disparity of the EL Latino group is larger than the non-EL Latino group would be approximately equal to the number of schools where the opposite is true. To test this hypothesis at an $\alpha = .05$ confidence level, I employed a chi-square analysis:

Given:
H_o: $p = .50$
H_1: $p \neq .50$
$N = 74$ (AISD elementary schools)
X = number of schools with EL Latino disparity > non-EL Latino disparity
$Np = .50$

Event	Obtained Frequency	Expected Frequency	Obtained Proportion	Expected Proportion
EL Latino disparity > non-EL Latino disparity	$f_1 = X$	$m_1 = Np$	$f_1N = P$	p
EL Latino disparity ≤ non-EL Latino disparity	$f_2 = N - f_1$	$m_2 = N(1 - p)$	$f_2N = Q = 1 - P$	$q = 1 - p$

Case Study

The second objective of this study was to investigate the Structural and Assessment factors that contribute to two AISD elementary schools' success in identifying gifted EL Latino children at relatively high rates. Given that this component of my dissertation study involved working with human participants, particularly school personnel, I was required to obtain permission from both AISD and the UT Institutional Review Board to conduct my research.

School identification and selection. To identify the schools that participated in this study, I examined the racial/ethnic profiles of the 74 AISD elementary schools. I

based my selections on PEIMS incidence data of the AISD elementary schools at the tertiary level of analysis described in the quantitative study methods section (p. 69). These data were rank-ordered by the number of gifted EL Latinos and presented in Table 4.2 (pp. 72-73). As can be seen in Table 4.2, Palm Elementary (school no. 1), for example, had a total enrollment of 716 students, and 40 students enrolled in the gifted program, for an incidence rate of 5.6%. Palm had 550 Latino students (76.8% of the total enrollment), with 27 Latinos enrolled in the gifted program (67.5% of the gifted enrollment). Disaggregating the Latino population into non-EL and EL components, there were 322 non-EL and 228 EL students enrolled (44.9% and 31.9% of the total enrollment, respectively). Regarding the gifted Latino enrollment, there were 15 non-EL and 12 EL students (37.5% and 30.0% of the gifted enrollment, respectively).

To select schools for possible participation in the study, I used two criteria: (a) the school must have a comparatively large number of EL Latinos enrolled in the gifted program; (b) the school must have a predominantly (>50%) Latino enrollment. Based upon these two criteria, I identified four schools with the highest gifted EL Latino enrollments as potential sites in which to conduct the case study. The data for these four schools are presented in Table 4.3 (p. 74).

Table 4.2

Demographic Profile of the Latino Population for 74 AISD Elementary Schools: 2002-2003

School	Total Enrollment			Total Latino				Non-EL Latino				EL Latino			
		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T	
	N	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
1. Palm	716	40	5.6	550	76.8	27	67.5	322	44.9	15	37.5	228	31.9	12	30.0
2. Wooldridge	732	33	4.5	568	77.6	23	69.7	151	20.7	11	33.3	417	56.9	12	36.4
3. Norman	563	20	3.6	391	69.4	13	65.0	161	28.6	3	15.0	230	40.9	10	50.0
4. Hart	617	38	6.2	388	62.9	21	55.3	120	19.4	11	28.9	268	43.5	10	26.3
5. Ridgetop	211	27	12.8	189	89.6	23	85.2	76	36.0	15	55.6	113	53.6	8	29.6
6. Blackshear	310	9	2.9	226	72.9	6	66.7	107	34.5	0	0.0	119	38.4	6	66.7
7. Govalle	487	25	5.1	401	82.3	20	80.0	253	52.0	14	56.0	148	30.4	6	24.0
8. Dawson	424	12	2.8	348	82.1	7	58.3	216	50.9	2	16.7	132	31.2	5	41.7
9. Metz	600	20	3.3	578	96.3	17	85.0	345	57.5	12	60.0	233	38.8	5	25.0
10. Galindo	712	42	5.9	587	82.4	39	92.9	333	46.8	34	81.0	254	35.7	5	11.9
11. Brown	603	10	1.7	496	82.3	7	70.0	174	28.9	3	30.0	322	53.3	4	40.0
12. Pecan Springs	612	21	3.4	266	43.5	6	28.6	103	16.8	2	9.5	163	26.7	4	19.0
13. St. Elmo	492	17	3.5	412	83.7	11	64.7	199	40.5	7	41.2	213	43.3	4	23.5
14. Brooke	286	9	3.1	265	92.7	9	100.0	156	54.7	6	66.7	109	38.0	3	33.3
15. Reilly	242	12	5.0	179	74.0	7	58.3	65	27.0	4	33.3	114	47.0	3	25.0
16. Cook	785	17	2.2	459	58.5	9	52.9	127	16.2	6	35.3	332	42.3	3	17.6
17. Wooten	593	14	2.4	485	81.8	13	92.9	129	21.8	10	71.4	356	60.0	3	21.4
18. Walnut Creek	946	61	6.4	512	54.1	20	32.8	169	17.8	17	27.9	343	36.3	3	4.9
19. Kocurek	586	18	3.1	278	47.4	4	22.2	224	38.2	2	11.1	54	9.3	2	11.1
20. Winn	668	8	1.2	276	41.3	3	37.5	97	14.6	1	12.5	179	26.8	2	25.0
21. Harris	600	6	1.0	479	79.8	3	50.0	120	20.1	1	16.7	359	59.8	2	33.3
22. Widen	793	12	1.5	675	85.1	7	58.3	369	46.6	5	41.7	306	38.5	2	16.7
23. Doss	662	93	14.0	69	10.4	6	6.5	29	4.4	4	4.3	40	6.0	2	2.2
24. Zavala	431	18	4.2	373	86.5	16	88.9	236	54.8	14	77.8	137	31.8	2	11.1
25. Rodríguez	755	17	2.3	616	81.6	16	94.1	240	31.8	14	82.4	376	49.8	2	11.8
26. Blanton	659	21	3.2	526	79.8	16	76.2	198	30.0	14	66.7	328	49.8	2	9.5
27. Ortega	303	4	1.3	230	75.9	3	75.0	140	46.2	2	50.0	90	29.7	1	25.0
28. Pickle	598	2	0.3	467	78.1	2	100.0	93	15.6	1	50.0	374	62.5	1	50.0
29. Pillow	405	13	3.2	142	35.1	3	23.1	87	21.5	2	15.4	55	13.5	1	7.7
30. Oak Springs	361	8	2.2	230	63.7	3	37.5	149	41.3	2	25.0	81	22.4	1	12.5
31. Allison	451	7	1.6	402	89.1	6	85.7	280	62.1	5	71.4	122	27.1	1	14.3
32. Mathews	389	15	3.9	141	36.2	5	33.3	84	21.7	5	33.3	57	14.5	1	6.7
33. Patton	825	92	11.2	163	19.8	15	16.3	143	17.4	15	16.3	20	2.4	1	1.1
34. Cunningham	635	29	4.6	303	47.7	10	34.5	250	39.4	9	31.0	53	8.3	1	3.4
35. Sánchez	390	8	2.1	368	94.4	7	87.5	240	61.6	6	75.0	128	32.7	1	12.5
36. Casey	860	46	5.3	444	51.6	16	34.8	372	43.2	15	32.6	72	8.4	1	2.2
37. Sunset Valley	517	13	2.5	322	62.3	3	23.1	150	29.1	1	7.7	172	33.2	1	7.7

School	Total Enrollment			Total Latino				Non-EL Latino				EL Latino			
		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T	
	N	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
38. Odom	775	21	2.7	546	70.5	11	52.4	382	49.3	10	47.6	164	21.2	1	4.8
39. Barrington	707	8	1.1	551	77.9	5	62.5	155	22.0	4	50.0	396	56.0	1	12.5
40. Travis Heights	522	35	6.7	328	62.8	10	28.6	254	48.6	9	25.7	74	14.2	1	2.9
41. Graham	672	18	2.7	402	59.8	4	22.2	132	19.6	3	16.7	270	40.2	1	5.6
42. McBee	643	15	2.3	477	74.2	6	40.0	154	23.9	5	33.3	323	50.3	1	6.7
43. Williams	617	57	9.2	378	61.3	22	38.6	285	46.3	21	36.8	93	15.0	1	1.8
44. Houston	849	18	2.1	749	88.2	11	61.1	325	38.2	10	55.6	424	50.0	1	5.6
45. Jordan	688	14	2.0	411	59.7	9	64.3	171	24.8	9	64.3	240	34.9	0	0.0
46. Sims	321	2	0.6	164	51.1	1	50.0	70	21.8	1	50.0	94	29.3	0	0.0
47. Linder	834	11	1.3	680	81.5	9	81.8	335	40.2	9	81.8	345	41.4	0	0.0
48. Andrews	607	7	1.2	350	57.7	2	28.6	89	14.7	2	28.6	261	43.0	0	0.0
49. Becker	258	3	1.2	203	78.7	3	100.0	149	57.9	3	100.0	54	20.8	0	0.0
50. Allan	462	10	2.2	402	87.0	8	80.0	223	48.2	8	80.0	179	38.8	0	0.0
51. Joslin	414	6	1.4	272	65.7	4	66.7	172	41.5	4	66.7	100	24.2	0	0.0
52. Highland Park	505	42	8.3	36	7.1	4	9.5	35	6.9	4	9.5	1	0.3	0	0.0
53. Baranoff	762	51	6.7	116	15.2	8	15.7	111	14.5	8	15.7	5	0.7	0	0.0
54. Maplewood	312	26	8.3	102	32.7	6	23.1	72	23.1	6	23.1	30	9.6	0	0.0
55. Pleasant Hill	513	6	1.2	390	76.0	3	50.0	272	53.0	3	50.0	118	23.0	0	0.0
56. Summitt	645	50	7.8	128	19.8	5	10.0	68	10.6	5	10.0	60	9.2	0	0.0
57. Kiker	754	30	4.0	59	7.8	2	6.7	54	7.1	2	6.7	5	0.7	0	0.0
58. Boone	582	26	4.5	251	43.1	8	30.8	208	35.7	8	30.8	43	7.5	0	0.0
59. Zilker	504	49	9.7	222	44.0	13	26.5	157	31.1	13	26.5	65	12.9	0	0.0
60. Hill	702	55	7.8	64	9.1	3	5.5	50	7.1	3	5.5	14	2.0	0	0.0
61. Barton Hills	320	66	20.6	48	15.0	7	10.6	45	14.2	7	10.6	3	0.8	0	0.0
62. Campbell	538	24	4.5	239	44.4	4	16.7	121	22.5	4	16.7	118	21.9	0	0.0
63. Cowan	463	27	5.8	158	34.1	5	18.5	118	25.5	5	18.5	40	8.6	0	0.0
64. Davis	593	46	7.8	93	15.7	4	8.7	73	12.3	4	8.7	20	3.4	0	0.0
65. Casis	642	65	10.1	52	8.1	2	3.1	29	4.5	2	3.1	23	3.6	0	0.0
66. Menchaca	639	33	5.2	257	40.2	7	21.2	216	33.8	7	21.2	41	6.5	0	0.0
67. Pease	235	4	1.7	96	40.9	1	25.0	95	40.4	1	25.0	1	0.4	0	0.0
68. Lee	366	45	12.3	68	18.6	3	6.7	53	14.4	3	6.7	15	4.2	0	0.0
69. Brentwood	420	18	4.3	190	45.2	2	11.1	104	24.8	2	11.1	86	20.4	0	0.0
70. Mills	816	61	7.5	109	13.4	3	4.9	93	11.4	3	4.9	16	1.9	0	0.0
71. Oak Hill	770	42	5.5	202	26.2	3	7.1	136	17.7	3	7.1	66	8.5	0	0.0
72. Bryker Woods	369	37	10.0	62	16.8	2	5.4	56	15.1	2	5.4	6	1.7	0	0.0
73. Langford	864	7	0.8	668	77.3	1	14.3	382	44.2	1	14.3	286	33.2	0	0.0
74. Gullett	435	42	9.7	59	13.6	1	2.4	53	12.2	1	2.4	6	1.4	0	0.0

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

Note. G/T = Gifted/Talented; EL = English Learner.

Table 4.3
Demographic Profile of the Latino Population for Four AISD Elementary Schools with Highest Gifted EL Latino Enrollments: 2002-2003

School	Total Enrollment			Total Latino				Non-EL Latino				EL Latino			
		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T		Total		G/T	
	N	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Palm	716	40	5.6	550	76.8	27	67.5	322	44.9	15	37.5	228	31.9	12	30.0
Wooldridge	732	33	4.5	568	77.6	23	69.7	151	20.7	11	33.3	417	56.9	12	36.4
Hart	617	38	6.2	388	62.9	21	55.3	120	19.4	11	28.9	268	43.5	10	26.3
Norman	563	20	3.6	391	69.4	13	65.0	161	28.6	3	15.0	230	40.9	10	50.0

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).
Note. G/T = Gifted/Talented; EL = English Learner.

Regarding the first criterion, comparatively large numbers of EL Latinos enrolled in the gifted program, these four schools had the highest enrollments of gifted EL Latinos of any of the 74 elementary schools in AISD for the 2002-2003 school year. In addition, gifted EL Latinos constituted from about one-fourth (26.3% at Hart) to one-half (50% at Norman) of the total gifted population in each of these schools. With respect to the second criterion, predominantly Latino enrollment, all four schools had predominantly Latino enrollments, ranging from 62.9% (Hart) to 77.6% (Wooldridge).

Once the four schools were identified in mid-March, 2003, personnel from AISD's Office of Program Evaluation sent letters and information packets describing the study to the principals of the four schools (see Appendix A). Approximately 2 weeks later, I contacted principals to schedule meetings to discuss the study and obtain permission to conduct research on their campuses. This process took about 2 months; during that time two of the four schools agreed to participate in the study (Palm; Wooldridge), and two schools declined (Hart; Norman). Regarding the two schools that declined to participate, one school provided no explanation for declining. With respect to

the other school, however, the principal explained that at that time there were a number of research projects at the school being conducted by the District. Thus, the principal did not want to place further demands on the faculty and staff.

Target population and samples. My target population consisted of school personnel involved in nomination and placement procedures for gifted programs from the two schools selected as noted in the section above. As such, the total *N* for my case study was 11 personnel. The breakdown of participants is listed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4
School Personnel Participating in Study

Personnel	*n*	Palm	Wooldridge
Principal	2	1	1
Bilingual Education Teachers	7	4	3
G/T Advocate	2	1	1
Total:	11	6	5

Given that the principal is the chief administrative officer of an individual school, I believe it is his or her leadership, goals, and philosophies of education, particularly as they pertain to EL students, which serve as a guiding force in the school. Thus, it is important to include the principal in the case study.

Given that this study also involves the successful identification and placement of *EL children* in gifted programs in the two selected schools, it is important to describe how EL children are placed in bilingual education and how gifted students are identified and placed. To qualify for bilingual education, a student's language abilities are first assessed using a home language survey. If the survey results indicate that a language other than English is spoken in the home, then the student's English proficiency is assessed utilizing a state-approved oral language proficiency measure and an English reading and language arts achievement measure (a listing of all state-approved tests can be obtained from the Texas

Education Agency website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/leptests.html). To be classified as "Limited English Proficient" (LEP; this is an older term used for EL), a student must score below state-mandated cut points on the oral language proficiency measure, and below the 40th percentile on an English reading and language arts achievement measure. If the student is of such limited English ability that achievement testing in English is invalid (i.e., the test cannot be administered in English), the student's lack of academic success in English can be demonstrated with two pieces of evidence. First, the student must fail to meet state performance standards *in English* on the appropriate TAKS test for the student's grade level. Second, the student must not have passed all subjects and courses taken. Within 10 days of classification, parents are provided: (a) notification of their child's LEP classification, (b) the school's request of the parents for placement in the bilingual education program, and (c) information on the benefits of the bilingual education program. Parents can accept or decline the placement of their children in the program.

Regarding eligibility for the gifted program, AISD's gifted program assessment procedures involve a three-step process: nomination, screening, and placement. The assessment battery contains multiple measures, and is presented in Table 4.5 (next page). Assessment information is collected in a cumulative G/T folder and contains standardized test data, teacher ratings, parent nomination forms, and portfolio materials, with all data recorded on the Student Identification Profile. The Gifted Selection Committee then evaluates each student's profile, and makes decisions to admit, reject, or delay a decision until further evidence is gathered.

Table 4.5
Assessment Battery for G/T Identification in AISD

Instrument	K-5	6-12
Adapted Academic Scales[a]	X	
Purdue Academic Scales[a]		X
Parent Nomination Form	X	X
Self/Peer Nomination Form	Optional	Self-Recommended
Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)	X	X
Raven's Progressive Matrices	X	
Raven's Advanced Matrices		X
Traits, Aptitudes, Behaviors (TABS)	X	X
Portfolio	X	X
Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT)	LEP students	LEP students
Additional Documented Evidence	As needed	As needed

Source: Austin Independent School District (2001).
[a]The Adapted Academic Scales and Purdue Academic Scales are academic behavioral scales completed by teachers.

Once EL students are placed in bilingual education, they receive their instruction from bilingual education teachers. As such, bilingual education teachers will have the most contact with EL students, and be most likely to nominate ELs for the gifted program. It is paramount, therefore, to include bilingual education teachers in the case study. The principals of the two schools identified all of the bilingual education teachers in their respective schools as potential participants in the study. During meetings with the identified bilingual education teachers, I described the investigation and obtained consents. Of the 6 bilingual education teachers at Palm, 4 teachers (66.7%) agreed to participate. At Wooldridge, 3 of the 7 bilingual education teachers (42.8%) agreed to participate.

At the same introductory meetings I conducted with the bilingual education teachers, I also met and obtained consents from the G/T Advocate for each of the two schools. The G/T Advocate, usually (but not always) is the Assistant Principal, and is specifically trained to manage the G/T program for the school. His or her duties include

collecting nomination forms from teachers and parents, organizing and recording assessment data and portfolios, and managing G/T folders for students nominated for evaluation. Given the vital importance of the G/T Advocate in the administration of the gifted program (particularly in terms of the evaluation process), it is critical to include the G/T Advocates from both participating schools in the study.

Methods. Given that this portion of my dissertation is qualitative in nature, I developed a number of methods to obtain data from different sources for the case study (the importance of multiple data courses in case study research will be discussed more fully later in this chapter). The first method involves campus-level surveys of gifted programs for the 74 AISD elementary schools. The next five methods pertain only to the two participating schools, and include: (a) descriptive analysis of evaluation results for ELs successfully placed in gifted classes, (b) disparity analysis of incidence rates for all nominations disaggregated by race/ethnicity and EL status, (c) school and personnel characteristics, (d) content analysis of semi-structured interviews with school personnel, and (e) observational analysis of Gifted Selection Committee meetings.

1) *Campus-level surveys*. This method involved obtaining information on each of the 74 elementary schools in AISD concerning the manner in which each school provides services for gifted students (e.g., pull-out programs; modified curriculum; clustering).[2] These data were obtained from the Office of Advanced Academic Services at AISD. As per state and district policy, all teachers of gifted students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of "Gifted Foundations" training. Furthermore, to maintain their gifted credentials, teachers must also complete 6 hours of additional training every year.

Gifted Foundations training for teachers and administrators is typically provided by AISD via in-service professional development modules.

To examine the relation between the availability of resources (e.g., credentialed teachers; provision of gifted services) and minority enrollment, I obtained information on teacher qualifications and the number of gifted students actually enrolled in their classes for all 74 elementary schools. I calculated a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between the percent of teachers with gifted qualifications who have gifted students enrolled in their classes, and the percent combined enrollment of African American, Latino, and American Indian students to determine the magnitude and direction of the relation.

In contrast to the previous section, where I obtained district-wide data for every elementary school campus, the following four methods pertain only to the two schools selected to participate in this study.

2) *Descriptive analysis of evaluation results*. To obtain student evaluation data, I received permission from the principals to review the Student Identification Profile for each student nominated for the gifted program in the 2002-2003 school year (see Appendix B for a blank form). To maintain student confidentiality, all identifying information (e.g., student name; grade; teacher name) was removed before review. I compiled evaluation data (e.g., test scores; teacher ratings) for all Latino students nominated. Via descriptive statistical analysis, I developed a descriptive profile of the population of gifted ELs in the two schools. I examined variations within and between the two schools, seeking to identify commonalities and unique attributes of the evaluation

process for each school. Ideally, the goal was to develop a typical "profile" of a gifted EL student for the schools, if such a profile exists.

3) *Incidence rates of nominations*. Utilizing the evaluation data described above, I compiled incidence data of nomination rates for the schools. I analyzed the nomination rates of students for the gifted program disaggregated by race/ethnicity and EL status. Examining the incidence rates of nominating children for the gifted program aids in explaining how these two schools have achieved their relatively higher level of success with gifted ELs.

4) *School and personnel characteristics*. Based upon demographic data obtained from the PEIMS database and interview data provided by respondent school personnel, I identified a number of commonalities in the background characteristics of school personnel between the two participating schools that contribute to the success of each school's identification of relatively greater numbers of gifted EL Latinos.

5) *Semi-structured interviews*. I conducted interviews to collect data concerning the Structural factor, and School-Community Relations and Teacher Participation interactions described in my conceptual model in Chapter 3. During the Summer of 2002, I piloted the interview protocols to deepen my understanding of the range of issues that would need to be included. Utilizing this interview methodology, I developed a "working snapshot" of the rich and complex patterns of interactions of personnel of the participating schools. I conducted interviews with the principal, bilingual education teachers, and G/T Advocates of the participating schools to examine the policies and procedures for identifying gifted children, and in particular, gifted EL Latinos.

Interviews were approximately 30-45 minutes, and were audiotaped and transcribed to maximize the accuracy of what transpired during the interviews. These interviews were conducted during the Fall of 2003.

The interview protocols are listed in Appendices C – E. These interviews examined the Structural and Assessment categories of my conceptual model (described in Chapter 3), investigating the schooling features and assessment processes that promote (or inhibit) the successful identification and placement of ELs in gifted programs in the participating schools.

The interview protocol for principals is listed in Appendix C. It is in four parts: (a) Background, (b) School Policy, (c) Diversity, and (d) and Parental Involvement sections. The Background section consists of five questions that examine the personal and professional history of the principal. These questions examine areas such as the principal's educational experiences as a college student, training and certifications as an educator, and any personal experiences with gifted programs, either as a child in a gifted program or as a parent of a child identified as gifted. My intention here is to investigate if the principal has had any personal or professional experiences with gifted education or gifted children that might predispose or sensitize him/her to the needs and challenges of gifted children.

The second section, School Policy, consists of seven questions related to policies on the assessment process for the gifted program, including questions about teacher participation, nomination and assessment procedures, and alternative assessment procedures for racial/ethnic minorities and ELs. My intention here is to examine the

principal's leadership, and his/her support and commitment to the gifted program, particularly as it relates to gifted EL Latinos.

The third section is titled Diversity, which consists of seven questions that investigate the principal's beliefs and perceptions about gifted EL Latinos, including principals' knowledge about giftedness, and the awareness of the challenges to identifying gifted EL Latinos. My purpose here is to examine the degree to which principals embrace the principle of affirmation with gifted EL Latinos, their knowledge base, and their beliefs about giftedness.

The final section, Parental Involvement, consists of five questions that explore principals' inclusion of parents in the assessment process, including information provided by the school about the gifted program, and principals' development of relationships with parents and the communities their schools serve. My intention here is to explore home-school interactions in relation to gifted EL Latinos, and the relationships that develop between school personnel and families.

The interview protocol for teachers is listed in Appendix D. Bilingual education teachers are included in this study for three reasons. First, given that the primary population of interest is gifted EL Latinos, bilingual education teachers have these students in their classes, and are involved in the assessment process. Second, teachers serve as the rank and file of any school, and are the school personnel who implement the principal's policies in their classrooms. Third, teachers work with children in their classrooms on a daily basis, and are the school personnel to have the most interactions with potential nominees for the gifted program. Given that principal *and* teacher

interview responses both serve as a source of data to examine the Structural factor, the teacher interview protocol is *almost* identical to the principal interview protocol to ensure reliable data collection. Four questions in the principal interview protocol, however, involve administrative issues (e.g., the principal's policies regarding the gifted program), and differ from the teacher protocol (appearing in boldface in Appendix C). For example, question no. 10 in the principal interview protocol reads: "How do you encourage teachers to nominate a student, especially an EL, for the gifted program?" This question was designed to elicit responses that tap principals' attitudes about gifted students as it is manifested in their leadership regarding nomination policies. In contrast to question no. 10 in the principal protocol, the corresponding question in the teacher interview protocol (also question no. 10) reads: "How many children have you nominated for the gifted program?" This question was designed to tap teachers' actual nominating behaviors as an indirect measure of the effectiveness of the principal's policies regarding nominating ELs for the gifted program.

The interview protocol for G/T Advocates is listed in Appendix E. The interview protocol for G/T Advocates is in three parts: (a) Training, (b) Instrumentation, and (c) Decisionmaking sections. The Training section consists of five questions that examine the Advocate's knowledge about giftedness and the assessment process for placement in the gifted program. My intention here is to investigate assessment personnel's expertise as evaluators for the gifted program, and their understanding of the different cultural manifestations of giftedness.

The second section, Instrumentation, consists of six questions related to the assessment procedures and instruments used to evaluate nominees, and particularly ELs. My intention here is to explore the assessment process itself, and the degree to which it is consistent with nondiscriminatory assessment procedures recommended for educational assessment of minorities. I also examine both state- and district-level policies regarding the assessment of gifted students in the next chapter.

The third section is titled Decisionmaking, which consists of six questions that investigate the decisionmaking process that leads to successful (or unsuccessful) identification and placement of ELs in gifted programs. My purpose here is to examine the degree to which other individuals, including parents and other school personnel, contribute to assessment and placement decisions.

6) *Observations of evaluations*. The data collection method was utilized to investigate the Assessment factor and Parent Nomination interaction of my conceptual model. Given that one aspect of this study is to investigate factors that lead to the successful identification and placement of ELs in gifted programs, observing the evaluation process in action would be extremely valuable in understanding these two schools' success. These observations focused on the instrumentation used to evaluate a nominee, the evaluation committee's processes, and recommendations. The observations of the evaluation of 36 nominees were conducted in the Spring of 2004.

Data analysis. Given that this study is a combined quantitative-case study investigation, a number of data analysis techniques are employed. As mentioned in the quantitative analysis section, I used chi-square and correlational analyses to examine the

sociodemographic data of AISD's 74 elementary schools. For the primary and tertiary levels of neglect, chi-square analysis is the analytic method of choice, given that I am investigating if the frequency distribution of AISD elementary schools (based on gifted incidence rates or EL > non-EL disparities) differs from a theoretical distribution. At the secondary level, however, I am examining the relation between racial/ethnic minority enrollment and gifted enrollment, therefore correlational analysis is the preferred method.

For the case study, I employed a combined quantitative-qualitative approach. For the first three data collection methods listed — campus-level surveys, descriptive analysis of evaluation results, and incidence rates of nominations — I employed a more quantitative approach, using correlational and descriptive statistical and disparity analytic methods. Given that the data in these methods are more quantitative in nature (e.g., number of teachers with gifted qualifications; test scores; nomination rates), these particular data collection methods lent themselves more appropriately to a quantitative analytic approach. Regarding the campus-level surveys, given that incidence data for the 2002-2003 school year are available, the correlation between the number of teachers with gifted qualifications and the number of students identified as gifted would be very informative. For the evaluation results, I performed a descriptive statistical analysis, examining variations within and between the two schools. I sought to identify commonalities and unique attributes of the evaluation process for each school. Ideally, the goal was to develop a typical "profile" of a gifted EL student for the schools, if such a profile exists.

For the qualitative data collection methods, gifted selection committee observations and semi-structured interviews, I employed two analytic methods. For the observations, I employed an observational approach. As part of data collection, I took field notes to record my impressions and observations during the committee meetings to facilitate my recall of events when I wrote my observational account of the meetings.

For the interviews, I employed a content analytic approach to the 11 interview transcripts (Holsti, 1968; cited in Berg, 2001). First, transcripts were organized by participants' responses to each interview question. Themes were then identified through a careful reading of the transcripts. These themes were then assigned a coding category, and a strict conceptual description of each category was developed (see Appendix F for a listing of coding categories). For example, the coding category "Affirmation" was described as a statement affirming the idea that gifted EL children do exist and can be identified. An exemplar of this coding category can be seen in the comment made by one the principals:

> I think one of the very first things I said to staff when I came onto this campus was, we need to look at our bilingual children, because as far as I'm concerned, any child that is learning two languages, and functioning in two languages, there's a gifted piece there. It's not easy to do that. With the population I have here [bilingual children], there *has* to be gifted children! You have to acknowledge and honor that.

During the category-generating process, there were some themes identified that were very closely related to one another. These themes were collapsed into a broader

category. For example, given that language is the vehicle of culture, the collapsing of themes that involved these two features into a broader "Language & Culture" category made theoretical sense. Statements in which participants explicitly used the word "culture" or "cultural values" (e.g., describing gifted EL children as bringing rich experiences or different cultural perspectives into the gifted program) were grouped with responses that described gifted EL children's language abilities (e.g., describing gifted EL children as being able to express themselves in more than one language). Categories that appeared in at least half of the responses across individual transcripts were judged valid categories for analysis. Transcripts were then reanalyzed and recoded independently using these coding criteria to insure validity and consistency across transcripts. Finally, participants' responses were regrouped by coding category to facilitate analysis.

To address concerns with reliability and validity, I drew from Yin's (1984) *Case Study Research* for recommendations in research design. To address concerns with construct validity, Yin recommended using multiple sources of data, and establishing a "chain of evidence" to operationalize the constructs introduced in the study. The multiple sources include interview data from school personnel, selection committee observations, nomination data, and teacher survey data. Regarding the interview protocols (described above), interview questions were designed to elicit responses that tapped each of the principles of my conceptual model. For example, question no. 6 of the teacher interview protocol, "How is a child nominated for evaluation of the gifted program?" was designed to tap teachers' knowledge and understanding of the nomination process, and constitutes

one method of operationalizing the "Professional Knowledge" principle in the theoretical model.

To address concerns of internal validity, Yin recommended three types of strategies that are ideal for case study analyses, including pattern matching, explanation-building, or time-series analysis. "Better case studies are the ones in which the explanations have reflected some theoretically significant propositions. For example, the causal links may reflect critical insights into public policy process or into social science theory" (Yin, 1984, p. 107). Given the design of my study, the most appropriate approach is explanation-building, as much of my data are qualitative in nature, and do not lend themselves to pattern matching or time-series analysis, which are better suited to more quantitative case study research. Furthermore, the analysis is guided by my conceptual model, which may have very important policy implications for the assessment of gifted ELs.

External validity concerns are addressed by using a literal replication, multiple-case study approach in the design of the study. Yin (1984) noted that multiple-case studies, like multiple experiments, follow "replication logic," in which each case "(a) predicts similar results (a *literal replication*) or (b) produces contrary results but for predictable reasons (a *theoretical replication*)" (p. 49). This dissertation study is a literal replication multiple-case study, as both schools in this study were selected for having similar characteristics, and theoretically similar processes and features. Given that the study is based on a rich conceptual model, this replication approach also provides support for the model, which can serve as a means to generalize to new cases for future research.

Finally, reliability issues are addressed using Yin's (1984) recommendations to use case study protocols. In both cases, identical procedures were documented and used in site selection, data collection, and data analysis. Identical interview and observation protocols were employed at both sites, and evaluation, nomination, and teacher survey data were obtained and analyzed with identical procedures. Furthermore, continuous crosschecks with the original propositions of the study were conducted to ensure consistency across the two data collection study sites.

In the next chapter, I present the results and conclusions of the quantitative and case study analyses. Within these results are fuller descriptions of AISD's gifted program, including state guidelines for gifted programs and official district policies.

Notes

[1]In the original conception of my research design, I intended to include interviewing parents of gifted EL Latino students to obtain data for the Sociocultural factor in my theoretical model. The ethical and logistical requirements to collect these data (e.g., identification of parents; obtaining informed consent; scheduling of interviews; data transcription), however, would have been prohibitive for the timely completion of this dissertation.

[2]It is important to note that this list of gifted instructional models is not comprehensive. In the pull-out model, gifted students are pulled out of their regular classes at specified times for instruction with a qualified gifted education teacher. This instructional model is not typically used by AISD. By contrast, in the modified curriculum model, teachers with the appropriate gifted education credentials modify the regular curriculum for gifted students in the mainstream classroom. This model, which is the preferred model in use in AISD, also allows students who are *not* in the gifted program to be exposed to gifted instructional strategies. Finally, in the clustering model gifted students are clustered together on the basis of a subject area, a special class, or at inter-grade, multi-age levels to proceed through the curriculum at a faster pace.

Chapter 5

Results

In the previous chapter, I described the methodology used to conduct this investigation. Given that this investigation combines quantitative analytic and case study methods, I present results for each part separately. I begin with the quantitative analysis, examining AISD demographic data for the 74 elementary schools. Second, I provide an analysis of Texas' and AISD's gifted education policies, and campus-level surveys of teacher credentials. Finally, I present the case study results. In this case study, I provide a descriptive analysis of evaluation data, a disparity analysis of nomination rates, an analysis of the school and personnel characteristics of the participating schools, a content analysis of semi-structured interviews, and an observational analysis of Gifted Selection Committee meetings.

Quantitative Analysis

The purpose of this quantitative analysis is to examine the assertion that gifted EL Latinos are the "neglected of the neglected of the neglected." This analysis was conducted at three levels of neglect: gifted children in general (the primary level), gifted minorities (the secondary level), and gifted EL Latinos (the tertiary level).

Primary Level of Neglect

In Chapter 2, I described the primary level of neglect as the neglect of gifted children in general, and provided evidence to support this assertion from two sources (i.e., the proportion of the educational and psychological literature on giftedness and gifted education compared to other areas of study; budgetary allocations for gifted programs). In Chapter 4, I examined the gifted incidence rates for the 74 AISD elementary schools to test my hypothesis. I state in my null hypothesis that if gifted students, in general, are *not* neglected, then the proportion of elementary schools in AISD with gifted incidence rates equal to or above the district average would not differ significantly from the proportion of schools with incidence rates below the district average.

Based on data obtained from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS; Texas Education Agency, 2003), in 2002-2003, AISD had 41,937 students enrolled in its 74 elementary schools. The data for each elementary school and the district are listed in Table 5.1 (next page). Of these students, 1,934 were identified as gifted, for a district average incidence rate of 4.6% (the district median rate was 3.51%). Incidence rates were also calculated for each of the 74 elementary schools..

As can be seen in the table, gifted incidence rates ranged from a very high rate of 20.63% (Barton Hills, school no. 1) to a disturbingly low rate of 0.33% (Pickle, school no. 74). Moreover, 46 (62.2%) of the 74 AISD elementary schools had incidence rates lower than the district average, while only 28 had incidence rates above the district average (see dividing line between school no. 28 and school no. 29 in Table 5.1).

Table 5.1
Percentage of Gifted Students in AISD Elementary Schools: 2003.

School	Number of students	Number of gifted students	Percent gifted students	School	Number of students	Number of gifted students	Percent gifted students
1. Barton Hills	320	66	20.63	38. St. Elmo	492	17	3.46
2. Doss	662	93	14.05	39. Pecan Springs	612	21	3.43
3. Ridgetop	211	27	12.80	40. Metz	600	20	3.33
4. Lee	366	45	12.30	41. Pillow	405	13	3.21
5. Patton	825	92	11.15	42. Blanton	659	21	3.19
6. Casis	642	65	10.12	43. Brooke	286	9	3.15
7. Bryker Woods	369	37	10.03	44. Kocurek	586	18	3.07
8. Zilker	504	49	9.72	45. Blackshear	310	9	2.90
9. Gullett	435	42	9.66	46. Dawson	424	12	2.83
10. Williams	617	57	9.24	47. Odom	775	21	2.71
11. Maplewood	312	26	8.33	48. Graham	672	18	2.68
12. Highland Park	505	42	8.32	49. Sunset Valley	517	13	2.51
13. Hill	702	55	7.83	50. Wooten	593	14	2.36
14. Davis	593	46	7.76	51. McBee	643	15	2.33
15. Summitt	645	50	7.75	52. Rodriguez	755	17	2.25
16. Mills	816	61	7.48	53. Oak Springs	361	8	2.22
17. Travis Heights	522	35	6.70	54. Cook	785	17	2.17
18. Baranoff	762	51	6.69	55. Allan	462	10	2.16
19. Walnut Creek	946	61	6.45	56. Houston	849	18	2.12
20. Hart	617	38	6.16	57. Sanchez	390	8	2.05
21. Galindo	712	42	5.90	58. Jordan	688	14	2.03
22. Cowan	463	27	5.83	59. Pease	235	4	1.70
23. Palm	716	40	5.59	60. Brown	603	10	1.66
24. Oak Hill	770	42	5.45	61. Allison	451	7	1.55
25. Casey	860	46	5.35	62. Widen	793	12	1.51
26. Menchaca	639	33	5.16	63. Joslin	414	6	1.45
27. Govalle	487	25	5.13	64. Ortega	303	4	1.32
28. Reilly	242	12	4.96	65. Linder	834	11	1.32
29. Cunningham	635	29	4.57	66. Winn	668	8	1.20
30. Wooldridge	732	33	4.51	67. Pleasant Hill	513	6	1.17
31. Boone	582	26	4.47	68. Becker	258	3	1.16
32. Campbell	538	24	4.46	69. Andrews	607	7	1.15
33. Brentwood	420	18	4.29	70. Barrington	707	8	1.13
34. Zavala	431	18	4.18	71. Harris	600	6	1.00
35. Kiker	754	30	3.98	72. Langford	864	7	0.81
36. Mathews	389	15	3.86	73. Sims	321	2	0.62
37. Norman	563	20	3.55	74. Pickle	598	2	0.33
				TOTAL	41,937	1,934	4.61

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

Given that the majority of schools in AISD have incidence rates of gifted students below the district average, the data appear to support the assertion that gifted children, *in general*, are neglected in the district.

Another way to illustrate the relative neglect of gifted students in general in AISD is to compare incidence rates across the various elementary schools in AISD. As noted previously, Barton Hills tops the list with an incidence rate of 20.6%, compared to Pickle, which has an incidence rate of only 0.3%. In other words, a child attending Barton Hills has a 1 in 5 chance of being identified as gifted, while a child attending Pickle would have only a *1 in 300* chance of being identified. If parity among schools existed, then many more students would be identified as gifted. That is, if all AISD elementary schools with gifted incidence rates below the district average rate had the same incidence rate as the district average, then the number of gifted students would increase from 1,934 to 2,489, an absolute increase of 555 students.

Given the observed frequencies of elementary schools with incidence rates above (37.8%) and below (62.2%) the district average rate, I performed a chi-square (χ^2) test to determine if the observed frequencies differed significantly from the expected frequencies (50% above and below the district average rate; see Table 5.2). The obtained χ^2 of 4.38 was significant at the $\alpha < .05$ level (critical value: $\chi^2 = 3.84$).

Table 5.2
Chi-Square Analysis for Primary Level of Neglect

Event	f_o	f_e	$f_o - f_e$	$\frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$
% gifted ≥ district average	28	37	9	2.19
% gifted < district average	46	37	-9	2.19
				$\chi^2 = 4.38$*

*$\alpha < .05$

Given that the gifted incidence rates of 62.2% of AISD's elementary schools fall below the district average rate, a proportion significantly larger than expected, this significant χ^2 supports the assertion that gifted children in general are neglected. That is, although some schools in AISD appear to be very successful at identifying gifted students, the majority of schools do not identify such students at comparable rates. One possible explanation for such divergent incidence rates in gifted programs across AISD's 74 elementary schools may lie in the degree of segregation that exists in AISD, which points to the secondary level of neglect — to which I turn next.

Secondary Level of Neglect

In Chapter 2, I described the secondary level of neglect as the neglect of gifted racial/ethnic minority students, a subpopulation of gifted students. I provided support for this assertion from the scholarly literature base on gifted minorities and demographic incidence data at national, regional, state, and district levels. I hypothesize in Chapter 4 that there is a relation between the percent minority enrollment and the percent gifted enrollment in AISD's elementary schools. I obtained 2002-2003 PEIMS data of the total enrollment, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, and the gifted program enrollment for all 74 AISD elementary schools (Texas Education Agency, 2003). Based on the PEIMS data, I calculated the percent minority enrollment of Latino, African American, and American Indian students and the percent gifted enrollment for each elementary school.[1] These data are rank-ordered by percent gifted enrollment, and presented in Table 5.3 (next page). As can be seen in the table, the minority enrollment rates ranged from a low rate

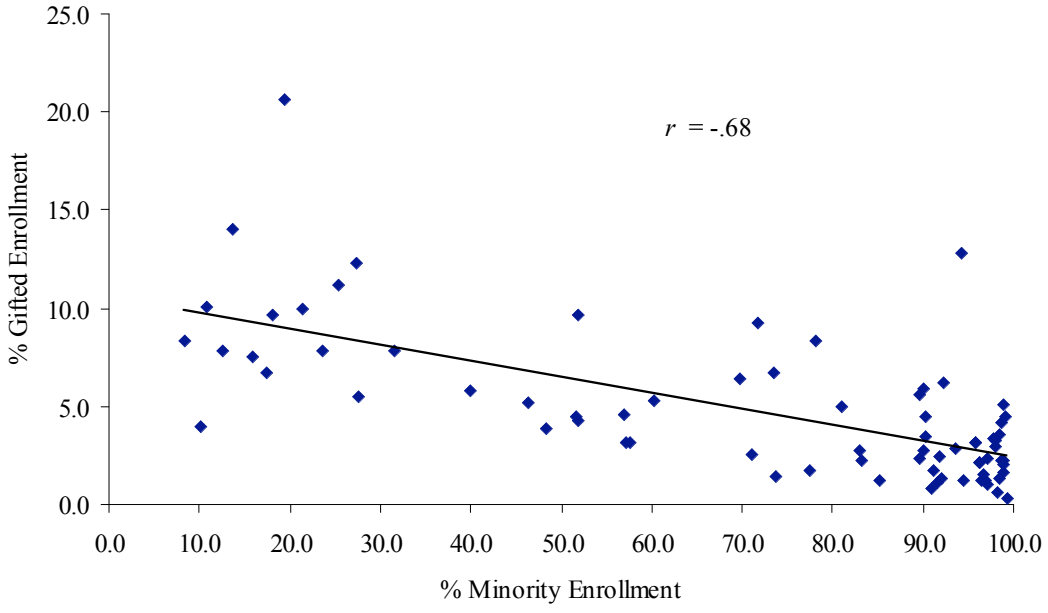
Table 5.3
Percentage of Minority Enrollment and Percentage of Gifted Students in AISD Elementary Schools: 2003

School	*N*	% Minority	Gifted Students *n*	Gifted Students %	School	*N*	% Minority	Gifted Students *n*	Gifted Students %
1. Barton Hills	320	19.4	66	20.63	38. St. Elmo	492	90.2	17	3.46
2. Doss	662	13.6	93	14.05	39. Pecan Springs	612	97.9	21	3.43
3. Ridgetop	211	94.3	27	12.80	40. Metz	600	98.0	20	3.33
4. Lee	366	27.3	45	12.30	41. Pillow	405	57.5	13	3.21
5. Patton	825	25.5	92	11.15	42. Blanton	659	95.8	21	3.19
6. Casis	642	10.7	65	10.12	43. Brooke	286	95.8	9	3.15
7. Bryker Woods	369	21.4	37	10.03	44. Kocurek	586	57.2	18	3.07
8. Zilker	504	52.0	49	9.72	45. Blackshear	310	98.1	9	2.90
9. Gullett	435	18.2	42	9.66	46. Dawson	424	93.6	12	2.83
10. Williams	617	71.8	57	9.24	47. Odom	775	83.1	21	2.71
11. Maplewood	312	78.2	26	8.33	48. Graham	672	90.0	18	2.68
12. Highland Park	505	8.3	42	8.32	49. Sunset Valley	517	71.0	13	2.51
13. Hill	702	12.7	55	7.83	50. Wooten	593	91.9	14	2.36
14. Davis	593	23.6	46	7.76	51. McBee	643	89.6	15	2.33
15. Summitt	645	31.6	50	7.75	52. Rodriguez	755	97.2	17	2.25
16. Mills	816	15.9	61	7.48	53. Oak Springs	361	98.6	8	2.22
17. Travis Heights	522	73.6	35	6.70	54. Cook	785	83.2	17	2.17
18. Baranoff	762	17.5	51	6.69	55. Allan	462	98.9	10	2.16
19. Walnut Creek	946	69.8	61	6.45	56. Houston	849	96.3	18	2.12
20. Hart	617	92.2	38	6.16	57. Sanchez	390	96.2	8	2.05
21. Galindo	712	90.0	42	5.90	58. Jordan	688	98.8	14	2.03
22. Cowan	463	40.0	27	5.83	59. Pease	235	77.4	4	1.70
23. Palm	716	89.7	40	5.59	60. Brown	603	91.2	10	1.66
24. Oak Hill	770	27.5	42	5.45	61. Allison	451	98.9	7	1.55
25. Casey	860	60.3	46	5.35	62. Widen	793	96.6	12	1.51
26. Menchaca	639	46.3	33	5.16	63. Joslin	414	73.7	6	1.45
27. Govalle	487	99.0	25	5.13	64. Ortega	303	98.3	4	1.32
28. Reilly	242	81.0	12	4.96	65. Linder	834	92.0	11	1.32
29. Cunningham	635	57.0	29	4.57	66. Winn	668	96.9	8	1.20
30. Wooldridge	732	90.3	33	4.51	67. Pleasant Hill	513	85.2	6	1.17
31. Boone	582	51.5	26	4.47	68. Becker	258	94.6	3	1.16
32. Campbell	538	99.1	24	4.46	69. Andrews	607	96.5	7	1.15
33. Brentwood	420	51.9	18	4.29	70. Barrington	707	91.5	8	1.13
34. Zavala	431	98.6	18	4.18	71. Harris	600	97.2	6	1.00
35. Kiker	754	10.2	30	3.98	72. Langford	864	90.9	7	0.81
36. Mathews	389	48.3	15	3.86	73. Sims	321	98.1	2	0.62
37. Norman	563	98.4	20	3.55	74. Pickle	598	99.3	2	0.33

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).
Note. % Minority = % combined Latino, African American, and American Indian enrollment.

of 8.3% (Highland Park, school no. 12) to a very high rate of 99.3% (Pickle, school no. 74). Highland Park is also among the schools with the highest gifted incidence rates (8.32%), while Pickle has the *lowest* gifted incidence rate (0.33%) of the 74 elementary schools. Moreover, looking down the table, as the percent gifted enrollment rate decreases, the percent combined minority enrollment rate seems to increase. This seemingly inverse relation between minority enrollment and gifted enrollment appears to support the assertion that gifted minority children experience the secondary level of neglect. To examine the secondary level of neglect, I calculated a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between the percent gifted and percent combined enrollment of Latino, African American, and American Indian students. A scatterplot of this correlational analysis is presented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1
Scatterplot of Correlation between Percentage of Minority Enrollment and Percentage of Gifted Students in AISD Elementary Schools ($N = 74$)



Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

The obtained correlation was –.68, indicating a statistically significant association ($\alpha <$ .05) between the degree of minority enrollment and gifted enrollment for the 74 AISD elementary schools. As can be discerned from Table 5.3 and Figure 5.1, as the minority enrollment increases, there is a tendency for the gifted enrollment to decrease. In other words, students who attend predominantly racial/ethnic minority enrollment elementary schools are less likely to be identified as gifted. This result is not surprising, given the long-standing underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs, dating back to Terman's (1925) study (discussed earlier in Chapter 2). This level of neglect, however, carries even more significance for the tertiary level of neglect, gifted ELs.

Tertiary Level of Neglect

In Chapter 2, I described the tertiary level of neglect as the neglect of gifted EL Latinos, a further subpopulation of the gifted minority population. I provided evidence to support this assertion from the scholarly literature base on gifted ELs and limited demographic incidence data at the district level. Given that EL Latinos are a subset of the total Latino population, and that not all ELs are Latino, I reasoned that it was necessary to disaggregate the gifted Latino population into EL and non-EL components. I state in my null hypothesis (see Chapter 4) that if gifted EL Latinos in general are *not* neglected, then the proportion of elementary schools in AISD where the gifted EL Latino disparity is higher than the gifted Non-EL Latino disparity would not differ significantly from the proportion of schools where the gifted EL Latino disparity is equal to or lower than the gifted non-EL Latino disparity.

Based on PEIMS data for the 2002-2003 school year, I calculated disparities for the non-EL Latino and EL Latino population for every AISD elementary school. To obtain these disparities, I calculated the percentage that each group comprises of the total enrollment *and* of the gifted enrollment. I subtracted the percent total enrollment from the percent gifted enrollment, and divided this difference by the percent total enrollment. The enrollment data and obtained disparities are presented in Table 5.4 (next page).

As can be seen in Table 5.4 (p. 100, top), in 2002-2003, Graham Elementary (school no. 38), for example, had a total student enrollment of 672 students, and a gifted enrollment of 18 students. Regarding non-EL Latinos, there were 132 students, comprising 19.6% of the total enrollment. In addition, 3 of these students were enrolled in the gifted program at Graham, constituting 16.7% of the total gifted enrollment. The obtained disparity is 15.0% underrepresentation of non-EL Latinos in the gifted program. With respect to the EL Latino population at Graham, there were 270 students, comprising 40.2% of the total student enrollment. Moreover, 1 EL student was enrolled in the gifted program, representing only 5.6% of the total gifted enrollment, for a disparity of 86.2% underrepresentation.

To ascertain if the pattern of EL Latino representation lower than non-EL Latino representation in gifted programs school is present in each school, I subtracted the non-EL Latino disparity from the EL Latino disparity. If the calculated difference is negative, then the school would fit the pattern for the tertiary level of neglect — EL Latinos are represented in gifted programs *less* than non-EL Latinos. A positive difference would indicate the school breaks from this pattern and EL Latinos are represented in gifted

Table 5.4
Disparity Analysis for Non-EL and EL Latino Gifted Students in AISD Elementary Schools: 2003

				Non-EL Latino					EL Latino					
				Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-	Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-	
	School	*N*	Gifted	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity[a] (%)	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity[a] (%)	Diff-erence
1.	Blackshear	310	9	107	34.5	0	0.0	-100.0	119	38.4	6	66.7	73.7	173.7
2.	Dawson	424	12	216	50.9	2	16.7	-67.2	132	31.2	5	41.7	33.6	100.8
3.	Kocurek	586	18	224	38.2	2	11.1	-70.9	54	9.3	2	11.1	20.0	90.9
4.	Norman	563	20	161	28.6	3	15.0	-47.5	230	40.9	10	50.0	22.4	69.9
5.	Pecan Springs	612	21	103	16.8	2	9.5	-43.2	163	26.7	4	19.0	-28.7	14.5
6.	Palm	716	40	322	44.9	15	37.5	-16.5	228	31.9	12	30.0	-5.9	10.6
7.	Winn	668	8	97	14.6	1	12.5	-14.2	179	26.8	2	25.0	-6.5	7.6
8.	Sunset Valley	517	13	150	29.1	1	7.7	-73.5	172	33.2	1	7.7	-76.9	-3.3
9.	Oak Springs	361	8	149	41.3	2	25.0	-39.4	81	22.4	1	12.5	-44.3	-4.9
10.	Pillow	405	13	87	21.5	2	15.4	-28.5	55	13.5	1	7.7	-43.2	-14.6
11.	Gullett	435	42	53	12.2	1	2.4	-80.5	6	1.4	0	0.0	-100.0	-19.5
12.	Ortega	303	4	140	46.2	2	50.0	8.2	90	29.7	1	25.0	-15.8	-24.0
13.	Harris	600	6	120	20.1	1	16.7	-17.0	359	59.8	2	33.3	-44.2	-27.2
14.	Brown	603	10	174	28.9	3	30.0	3.7	322	53.3	4	40.0	-25.0	-28.7
15.	Govalle	487	25	253	52.0	14	56.0	7.8	148	30.4	6	24.0	-21.0	-28.8
16.	Langford	864	7	382	44.2	1	14.3	-67.7	286	33.2	0	0.0	-100.0	-32.3
17.	Travis Heights	522	35	254	48.6	9	25.7	-47.1	74	14.2	1	2.9	-79.9	-32.8
18.	Brooke	286	9	156	54.7	6	66.7	21.9	109	38.0	3	33.3	-12.2	-34.1
19.	Bryker Woods	369	37	56	15.1	2	5.4	-64.2	6	1.7	0	0.0	-100.0	-35.8
20.	Cunningham	635	29	250	39.4	9	31.0	-21.3	53	8.3	1	3.4	-58.4	-37.1
21.	Metz	600	20	345	57.5	12	60.0	4.3	233	38.8	5	25.0	-35.6	-40.0
22.	Oak Hill	770	42	136	17.7	3	7.1	-59.6	66	8.5	0	0.0	-100.0	-40.4
23.	Mills	816	61	93	11.4	3	4.9	-57.0	16	1.9	0	0.0	-100.0	-43.0
24.	Brentwood	420	18	104	24.8	2	11.1	-55.3	86	20.4	0	0.0	-100.0	-44.7
25.	Widen	793	12	369	46.6	5	41.7	-10.6	306	38.5	2	16.7	-56.7	-46.2
26.	Lee	366	45	53	14.4	3	6.7	-53.6	15	4.2	0	0.0	-100.0	-46.4
27.	St. Elmo	492	17	199	40.5	7	41.2	1.8	213	43.3	4	23.5	-45.6	-47.4
28.	Patton	825	92	143	17.4	15	16.3	-6.2	20	2.4	1	1.1	-54.3	-48.1
29.	Casey	860	46	372	43.2	15	32.6	-24.6	72	8.4	1	2.2	-74.1	-49.6
30.	Doss	662	93	29	4.4	4	4.3	-3.3	40	6.0	2	2.2	-64.0	-60.7
31.	Pease	235	4	95	40.4	1	25.0	-38.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	-100.0	-61.8
32.	Allison	451	7	280	62.1	5	71.4	15.1	122	27.1	1	14.3	-47.2	-62.2
33.	Menchaca	639	33	216	33.8	7	21.2	-37.1	41	6.5	0	0.0	-100.0	-62.9
34.	Williams	617	57	285	46.3	21	36.8	-20.4	93	15.0	1	1.8	-88.3	-67.9
35.	Casis	642	65	29	4.5	2	3.1	-31.8	23	3.6	0	0.0	-100.0	-68.2
36.	Reilly	242	12	65	27.0	4	33.3	23.6	114	47.0	3	25.0	-46.8	-70.4
37.	Davis	593	46	73	12.3	4	8.7	-29.1	20	3.4	0	0.0	-100.0	-70.9

School	*N*	Gifted	Non-EL Latino Enrollment *n*	Non-EL Latino Enrollment %	Non-EL Latino Gifted *n*	Non-EL Latino Gifted %	Non-EL Latino Dis-parity[a] (%)	EL Latino Enrollment *n*	EL Latino Enrollment %	EL Latino Gifted *n*	EL Latino Gifted %	EL Latino Dis-parity[a] (%)	Diff-erence
38. Graham	672	18	132	19.6	3	16.7	-15.0	270	40.2	1	5.6	-86.2	-71.2
39. Cowan	463	27	118	25.5	5	18.5	-27.4	40	8.6	0	0.0	-100.0	-72.6
40. Campbell	538	24	121	22.5	4	16.7	-25.9	118	21.9	0	0.0	-100.0	-74.1
41. Odom	775	21	382	49.3	10	47.6	-3.4	164	21.2	1	4.8	-77.5	-74.1
42. Barton Hills	320	66	45	14.2	7	10.6	-25.2	3	0.8	0	0.0	-100.0	-74.8
43. Hill	702	55	50	7.1	3	5.5	-22.8	14	2.0	0	0.0	-100.0	-77.2
44. Sanchez	390	8	240	61.6	6	75.0	21.7	128	32.7	1	12.5	-61.8	-83.5
45. Zilker	504	49	157	31.1	13	26.5	-14.7	65	12.9	0	0.0	-100.0	-85.3
46. Boone	582	26	208	35.7	8	30.8	-13.7	43	7.5	0	0.0	-100.0	-86.3
47. Hart	617	38	120	19.4	11	28.9	49.4	268	43.5	10	26.3	-39.5	-88.9
48. Kiker	754	30	54	7.1	2	6.7	-6.2	5	0.7	0	0.0	-100.0	-93.8
49. Summitt	645	50	68	10.6	5	10.0	-5.7	60	9.2	0	0.0	-100.0	-94.3
50. Pleasant Hill	513	6	272	53.0	3	50.0	-5.6	118	23.0	0	0.0	-100.0	-94.4
51. Wooldridge	732	33	151	20.7	11	33.3	61.2	417	56.9	12	36.4	-36.1	-97.3
52. Ridgetop	211	27	76	36.0	15	55.6	54.2	113	53.6	8	29.6	-44.7	-98.9
53. Maplewood	312	26	72	23.1	6	23.1	-0.1	30	9.6	0	0.0	-100.0	-99.9
54. Zavala	431	18	236	54.8	14	77.8	42.0	137	31.8	2	11.1	-65.0	-107.1
55. Mathews	389	15	84	21.7	5	33.3	53.5	57	14.5	1	6.7	-54.1	-107.6
56. Baranoff	762	51	111	14.5	8	15.7	8.0	5	0.7	0	0.0	-100.0	-108.0
57. McBee	643	15	154	23.9	5	33.3	39.4	323	50.3	1	6.7	-86.7	-126.2
58. Houston	849	18	325	38.2	10	55.6	45.3	424	50.0	1	5.6	-88.9	-134.2
59. Highland Park	505	42	35	6.9	4	9.5	38.5	1	0.3	0	0.0	-100.0	-138.5
60. Galindo	712	42	333	46.8	34	81.0	73.2	254	35.7	5	11.9	-66.6	-139.8
61. Walnut Creek	946	61	169	17.8	17	27.9	56.2	343	36.3	3	4.9	-86.4	-142.7
62. Joslin	414	6	172	41.5	4	66.7	60.7	100	24.2	0	0.0	-100.0	-160.7
63. Allan	462	10	223	48.2	8	80.0	65.8	179	38.8	0	0.0	-100.0	-165.8
64. Becker	258	3	149	57.9	3	100.0	72.8	54	20.8	0	0.0	-100.0	-172.8
65. Cook	785	17	127	16.2	6	35.3	117.9	332	42.3	3	17.6	-58.3	-176.2
66. Andrews	607	7	89	14.7	2	28.6	94.9	261	43.0	0	0.0	-100.0	-194.9
67. Blanton	659	21	198	30.0	14	66.7	122.3	328	49.8	2	9.5	-80.9	-203.2
68. Linder	834	11	335	40.2	9	81.8	103.6	345	41.4	0	0.0	-100.0	-203.6
69. Barrington	707	8	155	22.0	4	50.0	127.6	396	56.0	1	12.5	-77.7	-205.2
70. Sims	321	2	70	21.8	1	50.0	129.3	94	29.3	0	0.0	-100.0	-229.3
71. Rodriguez	755	17	240	31.8	14	82.4	159.1	376	49.8	2	11.8	-76.4	-235.4
72. Pickle	598	2	93	15.6	1	50.0	221.5	374	62.5	1	50.0	-20.1	-241.6
73. Jordan	688	14	171	24.8	9	64.3	159.3	240	34.9	0	0.0	-100.0	-259.3
74. Wooten	593	14	129	21.8	10	71.4	227.8	356	60.0	3	21.4	-64.3	-292.1

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

programs *more* than non-EL Latinos. Therefore, returning to Graham as an example, the gifted non-EL Latino disparity was 15.0% underrepresentation while the gifted EL Latino disparity was 86.2% underrepresentation. The difference between these two disparities was –71.2 percentage points, indicating that Graham indeed fits the pattern for the tertiary level of neglect.

The differences between EL and non-EL Latino representations for the 74 AISD elementary schools ranged widely, from 173.7 percentage points in favor of EL Latinos (Blackshear, school no. 1) to an enormous –292.1 percentage points in favor of non-EL Latinos (Wooten, school no. 74). Furthermore, 67 schools (90.5%) exhibited the characteristic pattern of EL Latino < non-EL Latino representation in gifted programs, while only 7 schools (9.5%) defied this pattern, demonstrating that EL Latino students had a greater representation in the gifted program (see dividing line between school no. 7 and school no. 8 in Table 5.4, p. 99). Given that the overwhelming majority of elementary schools in AISD demonstrate the EL Latino < non-EL Latino representation in gifted programs pattern, the data appear to support the assertion that gifted EL Latinos experience the tertiary level of neglect.

Based on the observed frequencies of elementary schools with EL ≤ non-EL representation (90.5%) and EL > non-EL representation (9.5%), I performed another chi-square (χ^2) test to determine if the observed frequencies differed significantly from the expected frequencies (50% for both EL ≤ non-EL and EL > non-EL). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.5 (next page).

Table 5.5
Chi-Square Analysis for Tertiary Level of Neglect

Event	f_o	f_e	$f_o - f_e$	$\frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$
EL Latino disparity > non-EL Latino disparity	7	37	30	24.32
EL Latino disparity ≤ non-EL Latino disparity	67	37	-30	24.32
				$\chi^2 = 48.64$*

*$\alpha < .05$

The obtained χ^2 of 48.65 was significant at the $\alpha < .05$ level (critical value: $\chi^2 = 5.02$). Moreover, this large result (which was significant even at the $\alpha < .001$ level) lends significant empirical support to the assertion that gifted ELs experience the tertiary level of neglect.

From the previous three analyses, there is empirical evidence that all three levels of neglect — the primary (gifted children in general), the secondary (gifted racial/ethnic minorities), *and* the tertiary (gifted ELs) — are present in AISD. Despite the bleak picture these results paint for EL students regarding identification and placement in gifted programs, it is important to note that at every level of neglect examined, and especially at the tertiary level, there were schools that defied the typical pattern of underrepresentation. It is these schools that I turn to later in this chapter.

Discussion of State- and District-Level Gifted Education Policies

In order to investigate how some AISD schools successfully identify EL Latinos as gifted, it is important to examine state- and district-level policies for the education of gifted students. I will restrict the discussion to those policies that are relevant to this

dissertation, namely, policies concerned with the identification, assessment, and placement of students in gifted programs.

State Policies for the Education of Gifted Students

According to the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* (hereafter referred to as *Texas State Plan*; Texas Education Agency, 2000), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) assesses services for the gifted through the District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) system, listing the criteria for three levels of program accountability. The first accountability level, "Acceptable," represents the basic guidelines for districts to provide services for gifted students. The criteria for the higher two levels, "Recognized" and "Exemplary," serve as guidelines for districts to improve their programs. Regarding program accountability concerning student assessment, schools districts are assessed on seven categories with respect to: (a) parental notification of procedures of student identification for gifted programs; (b) policies involving student placement in gifted programs; (c) scheduling of nominations and assessment of students; (d) assurance of service delivery to all students identified as gifted; (e) assessment procedures; (f) access and representation of all populations in gifted programs; (g) qualifications of selection personnel.

Parental notification of procedures of student identification for gifted programs. This category concerns parents' accessibility to information about gifted programs and the nomination and identification process. At the acceptable level, districts must provide to all parents written policies on student identification approved by the district board of

trustees. At the recognized level, nomination and assessment forms are provided to families in a language they understand, in written form or through a translator or interpreter. Furthermore, parents and staff are informed of placement decisions and families can meet with school personnel to discuss assessment data. At the exemplary level, districts provide an "awareness session prior to the nomination period for families to receive an overview of the assessment procedures and services for gifted/talented students" (Texas Education Agency, 2000, p. 3).

Policies involving student placement in gifted programs. This category pertains to district policies about student placement. At the acceptable level, districts' written policies must include provisions for (a) student furloughs, (b) reassessment, (c) exiting of students, (d) transfer students, and (e) appeals of district placement decisions. At the recognized level, however, these policies make specific provisions in each of the five aforementioned areas. For example, regarding furloughs, district policies allow for students to take a leave of absence from the gifted program for specified reasons and a specified length of time without being exited from the gifted program. Regarding reassessment policies, reassessment should be based on student performance and occur no more than once during the elementary, middle school, and high school grades, respectively. Policies related to exiting students should be based on student performance, and final decisions should be made by committee after consultation with the parents and student regarding the most appropriate education placement for the student. Concerning transfer students, district policies should provide for proper student assessment and placement within six weeks of the student transfer, address transfers between campuses

within the district, and ensures that when a student transfers to a new district, the sending district will include information on the student's assessment data. Finally, district policies allow for parents, students, and school personnel to appeal committee decisions and provide additional assessment data, if appropriate. At the exemplary level, districts review their board policies regarding student assessment at least once every three years and modify them as necessary.

Scheduling of nominations and assessment of students. This category delineates when students can be nominated and assessed for placement in the gifted program. At the acceptable level, students at any grade level can be nominated and assessed for placement once a year. At the recognized level, students are considered for placement once a year in the elementary grades, and once a semester in the secondary grades. At the exemplary level, nomination and assessment is a year-round, ongoing process.

Assurance of service delivery to all students identified as gifted. This category specifies which students shall be assessed and provided services. At the acceptable level, districts must assess students from grades K-12. With this category, however, there are no criteria for recognized status, but at the exemplary level, students in grades 1-12 are assessed and served in all areas of giftedness as defined by Texas Education Code §29.121.

Assessment procedures. This category involves specific provisions regarding the assessment process for placement in the gifted program. At the acceptable level, the assessment process must: (a) include measures from multiple sources for each of the areas of giftedness for which the district provides services; (b) take place in a language

the student understands or use nonverbal measures; (c) at the kindergarten level, as many as possible, but at least three criteria are used to indicate the student is performing at remarkably high levels relative to age peers; (d) in grades 1-12, a minimum of three appropriate criteria are used to assess giftedness in intellectual functioning or a specific academic field; (e) at least three criteria are used to assess for leadership, artistic, or creative giftedness, if services for these areas are offered. There are two criteria at the recognized level: (a) a selection committee makes placement decisions based on assessment data that indicate the most appropriate educational setting would be in the gifted program, and (b) all kindergarten students are automatically screened for the gifted program. At this time, there are no criteria for the exemplary level in this category.

Access and representation of all populations in gifted programs. This category, perhaps the most pertinent to the present investigation, concerns equal access for all student populations to services for the gifted. Although the phrase "all populations" is not defined in the *State Plan*, it is likely that this phrase means that all students, regardless of racial/ethnic background, economic disadvantagement, or English learner (EL) status, should have access to the assessment process. At the acceptable level, districts must provide data and have procedures that all populations have access to assessment, and if identified, are offered services. Given the historical and contemporary underrepresentation of racial/ethnic minority students, and particularly ELs, at the recognized level, districts must demonstrate for two consecutive years that the gifted student population is making gains and moving toward reflecting the general student

population. At the exemplary level, such parity between the gifted population and the general student population has been maintained for two of the past three years.

Qualifications of selection personnel. This category concerns the qualifications of school personnel charged with making gifted placement decisions. At the acceptable level, selection committees must contain at least three educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students. At the recognized level, a majority of committee members must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 hours of training. At the exemplary level, a majority of selection committee members have completed the 30-hour training requirements, and are current with 6 additional hours of professional development training in gifted/talented education annually.

In sum, the *Texas State Plan* provides guidelines for districts to develop, implement, and evaluate programs for gifted students. Within these guidelines are specific recommendations for districts to design policies that directly affect racial/ethnic minorities and EL students. How these recommendations are implemented, however, vary from district to district.

Gifted Education in the Austin Independent School District (AISD)

In the preceding section, I described the state-level policies for gifted students, as delineated in the *Texas State Plan*. Although the *Texas State Plan* provides guidelines for basic gifted services, the state also provides guidelines for districts to improve their gifted services. Given that the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how AISD schools are successfully identifying gifted EL Latinos, it is also important to examine

AISD's policies for gifted programs. This discussion will also be restricted to those policies that concern student identification, nomination, and placement in AISD's gifted program. It is very important, however, to delineate the type of services AISD offers to students identified as gifted.

According to the *Austin Independent School District Gifted/Talented Program Guide* (hereafter referred to as the *Program Guide*; Austin Independent School District, 2001), AISD serves students who demonstrate outstanding academic and intellectual abilities. These outstanding abilities may be manifested as "an outstanding aptitude in one or more of the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies or in [the] ability to process information more rapidly with greater depth and complexity" (p. 2). Using the aforementioned seven categories regarding student identification delineated in the *Texas State Plan*, one has the means to evaluate AISD's policies to provide services for gifted students.

Parental notification of procedures of student identification for gifted programs. Included in the *Program Guide* are forms in English and Spanish that provide information regarding the services, nomination, assessment, and placement procedures for the gifted program. These information sheets are sent to parents at the beginning of every school year and to parents when they newly enroll their children in the district. Parent nomination forms are also provided in English and Spanish in the *Program Guide*, and parents are notified of all placement, furlough, or exit decisions. These polices are consistent with the criteria delineated in the *Texas State Plan* at the recognized level. Furthermore, AISD, as a member of the state program for gifted education, provides

informational and training sessions for community members at various times throughout the year to encourage and promote family/community involvement in the gifted program, consistent with the exemplary level criteria.

Policies involving student placement in gifted programs. AISD meets all the criteria at the recognized level for this category. The *Program Guide* contains written policies meeting the specific provisions concerning each of the five areas listed in the *Texas State Plan*: (a) student furloughs, (b) reassessment, (c) exiting of students, (d) transfer students, and (e) appeals of district placement decisions. Furthermore, AISD specifically requires that the gifted program be evaluated periodically. Assuming that this periodic evaluation takes place at least once every 3 years, then AISD's policy complies with the exemplary level.

Scheduling of nominations and assessment of students. According to the *Program Guide*, AISD's nomination process is a year-round, ongoing process, which would be consistent with the exemplary level. Yet, given the amount of information that must be collected for the evaluation, including standardized testing, teacher and parent ratings, and cataloging of the nominee's exemplary work for the portfolio by the teachers, schools typically have two nomination periods. There is one in the Fall and one in the Spring, during which parents or teachers may nominate a child. If a parent or teacher wishes to nominate a student after these two periods, it is typically recommended they postpone until the next nomination period. School personnel have commented, however, that nominations will be accepted *at any time* during the school year if the parent or teacher requests the nomination be included in the current round of evaluations.

Assurance of service delivery to all students identified as gifted. AISD's policies meet the acceptable level, as AISD serves all students identified as academically or intellectually gifted in grades K-12. AISD cannot meet the exemplary criteria for this category, however, as AISD's policies state that gifted services are provided only for students identified as academically gifted, not in all areas of giftedness defined by TEC §29.121 (e.g., leadership; creativity; fine arts; athletics).

Assessment procedures. AISD's assessment procedures were presented in Chapter 4, and involve a three-step process: nomination, screening, and placement (see Table 4.5, p. 77, for a listing of the assessment battery instruments; a brief description of the assessment battery instruments for K-5 students is also provided in Appendix G). Included in the *Program Guide* is a specific sequence of activities for each phase of the identification process, and clearly outlines the responsibilities for parents, teachers, the Gifted/Talented (G/T) Campus Advocate (described later), and the Gifted Selection Committee. Assessment information is collected in a cumulative G/T folder and contains data from multiple sources.

> Data from the identification instruments is [sic] recorded on the Student Identification Profile. The Selection and Placement Committee at the campus analyzes each Profile and accompanying documents to determine whether (a) placement is merited, (b) additional documentation is needed, or, (c) the student should not be placed in the G/T program at this time. (Austin Independent School District, 2001, p. 8)

These policies meet the criteria for the acceptable and recognized levels.

Access and representation of all populations in gifted programs. Given that this dissertation involves the successful identification and placement of EL Latinos in gifted programs, it is noteworthy that AISD includes the Bilingual Verbal Ability Test in its assessment battery. Furthermore, nonverbal intelligence measures such as the Raven's Progressive Matrices, inclusion of portfolios of student performances, behavioral scales, and parental nomination point to AISD's commitment to include students of "all populations" in the gifted program (see Appendix G for descriptions of these instruments). These policies are consistent with criteria at the acceptable level delineated in the *Texas State Plan*. AISD does not, however, meet the criteria for exemplary status, as AISD demonstrates an underrepresentation of racial/ethnic minorities, economically disadvantaged, and EL students in the gifted program. Given the historical and contemporary underrepresentation of racial/ethnic minority students, and particularly ELs in gifted programs throughout Texas and the U.S., it is likely that *no district in the State of Texas meets the exemplary criteria*. AISD may meet the criteria at the recognized level, however, if the district can show that gains are being made to increase the presence of underrepresented groups in the gifted program.

Qualifications of selection personnel. According the *Program Guide*, each campus in AISD employs a G/T Campus Advocate, an educator that is specifically trained to serve gifted students, their families, and teachers who work with the gifted. G/T Advocates must have completed at least 30 hours of Gifted Foundations training and have the following responsibilities:

1. Receiving materials, such as curriculum announcements, meeting notifications, etc., from the Department of Advanced Academic Services and the distribution of these materials.
2. Coordinating the nomination, testing and selection process of G/T students. Acquiring necessary testing materials, organizing results of the screening process, and meeting with the Campus Selection and Placement Committee to make program decisions.
3. Forwarding the identification matrix and results of all students tested, as well as test administration materials, to G/T Office.
4. Ensuring that testing and placement information is placed in the student's cumulative folder.
5. Notifying parents of a child's admission or exiting from the G/T Program.
6. Attending meetings related to state compliance and district program updates.
7. Designing and providing staff development at the campus level as deemed appropriate by the campus administration, as well as providing teacher G/T instructional and assessment support. (Austin Independent School District, 2001, p. 6)

District policy also mandates that the Selection and Placement Committee consist of at least three members who have had training working with gifted students, and all educators who work with gifted students must attend at least six hours of professional development yearly. These two policies appear to indicate that AISD meets the criteria for exemplary status for this category.

In sum, based upon the policies delineated in the *Program Guide*, AISD meets the state criteria for exemplary status in four of the seven categories regarding the identification, evaluation, and placement of students in gifted programs, and recognized status for one, and possibly two other categories. These ratings indicate that AISD is committed to providing high-quality services for its gifted students. It is important to note, however, that district-level policies can be implemented in myriad ways at the individual campus level, with administrators interpreting district policy in their own way. In the next section, I examine how teacher qualifications are distributed across AISD's elementary school campuses to investigate one aspect of the available resources for gifted students in AISD.

Campus-Level Surveys

In previous sections, I examined the *Texas State Plan* to describe state guidelines for gifted programs, reviewing the District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) accountability criteria regarding identification, evaluation, and placement of gifted students in Texas public schools. I also investigated the AISD *Program Guide* to analyze AISD's gifted programs based on the DEC criteria delineated in the *Texas State Plan*. At the district level, AISD appears to be complying with state guidelines for gifted programs.

Another method to investigate the gifted programs in AISD involved obtaining information on each of the 74 elementary schools in AISD concerning the type of services each school provides for gifted students. According to Dr. Jim Granada,

Director of Advanced Academic Services for AISD, gifted services in AISD are provided via a modified curriculum model, in which teachers modify the regular curriculum for gifted students in the mainstream classroom (personal communication with Dr. Granada, November 19, 2003). This modification occurs through a variety of methods, including, but not limited to problem solving, higher-level thinking and questioning, and independent study and research (Austin Independent School District, 2001). In some cases, however, gifted children who are assigned to a teacher without sufficient training in gifted education are pulled out of their regular classrooms and receive modified instruction from a qualified gifted teacher. Given the degree of underrepresentation of minority students in gifted programs discussed in previous sections, I examined the relation between minority enrollment and teacher qualifications in AISD. I hypothesize that there is a negative association between the minority enrollment and the percentage of teachers with gifted teaching credentials who have gifted students in their classrooms.

Regarding teacher qualifications, I obtained 2002-2003 PEIMS data from the AISD Office of Advanced Academic Services on teachers in each of the 74 elementary schools in AISD. Data included the total number of teachers, and the number of teachers with gifted education teaching credentials who also had gifted students enrolled in their classrooms. These data are presented in Table 5.6 (next page). In 2002-2003 at Maplewood Elementary (school no. 4), for example, 78.2% of the total school enrollment consisted of Latino, African American, and American Indian students.[2] There were a total of 15 teachers teaching at Maplewood. Of these 15 teachers, 12 had gifted credentials, or 80.0% of the total teaching force. Regarding gifted students, however,

Table 5.6

Percentage Minority Enrollment and Percentage of Teachers with Gifted Credentials and Students Enrolled in their Classrooms in AISD Elementary Schools: 2002-2003

School	%	Teachers					School	%	Teachers				
			Gifted Credentials		Credentials & Students					Gifted Credentials		Credentials & Students	
	Min.	N[a]	*n*	%	*n*	%		Min.	*N*	*n*	%	*n*	%
1. Highland Park	8.3	26	22	84.6	14	53.8	38. Kocurek	57.2	31	17	54.8	6	19.4
2. Williams	71.8	30	30	100.0	15	50.0	39. Pleasant Hill	85.2	26	11	42.3	5	19.2
3. Bryker Woods	21.4	21	18	85.7	10	47.6	40. Wooldridge	90.3	32	21	65.6	6	18.8
4. Maplewood	78.2	15	12	80.0	7	46.7	41. Pecan Springs	97.9	34	16	47.1	6	17.6
5. Doss	13.6	32	25	78.1	14	43.8	42. Menchaca	46.3	35	24	68.6	6	17.1
6. Davis	23.6	31	21	67.7	12	38.7	43. Casey	60.3	49	26	53.1	8	16.3
7. Gullett	18.2	26	22	84.6	10	38.5	44. Norman	98.4	26	9	34.6	4	15.4
8. Pillow	57.5	21	15	71.4	8	38.1	45. Sanchez	96.2	20	15	75.0	3	15.0
9. Barton Hills	19.4	33	16	48.5	12	36.4	46. Blanton	95.8	35	19	54.3	5	14.3
10. Summitt	31.6	36	26	72.2	13	36.1	47. Reilly	81.0	14	5	35.7	2	14.3
11. Travis Heights	73.6	28	22	78.6	10	35.7	48. Wooten	91.9	28	15	53.6	4	14.3
12. Brooke	95.8	17	11	64.7	6	35.3	49. Walnut Creek	69.8	44	34	77.3	6	13.6
13. Casis	10.7	35	30	85.7	12	34.3	50. Cook	83.2	40	18	45.0	5	12.5
14. Blackshear	98.1	15	8	53.3	5	33.3	51. Joslin	73.7	24	12	50.0	3	12.5
15. Hill	12.7	33	19	57.6	11	33.3	52. McBee	89.6	34	15	44.1	4	11.8
16. Ridgetop	94.3	18	16	88.9	6	33.3	53. Pease	77.4	17	11	64.7	2	11.8
17. Baranoff	17.5	43	35	81.4	14	32.6	54. Metz	98.0	26	19	73.1	3	11.5
18. Kiker	10.2	39	25	64.1	12	30.8	55. Odom	83.1	35	19	54.3	4	11.4
19. Lee	27.3	26	23	88.5	8	30.8	56. Graham	90.0	36	16	44.4	4	11.1
20. Patton	25.5	43	29	67.4	13	30.2	57. Barrington	91.5	37	11	29.7	4	10.8
21. Zilker	52.0	34	26	76.5	10	29.4	58. Ortega	98.3	19	7	36.8	2	10.5
22. Winn	96.9	35	18	51.4	10	28.6	59. Linder	92.0	40	16	40.0	4	10.0
23. Cunningham	57.0	34	22	64.7	9	26.5	60. Rodriguez	97.2	42	20	47.6	4	9.5
24. Dawson	93.6	23	10	43.5	6	26.1	61. Brown	91.2	26	11	42.3	2	7.7
25. Sunset Valley	71.0	27	18	66.7	7	25.9	62. Harris	97.2	29	12	41.4	2	6.9
26. Brentwood	51.9	20	8	40.0	5	25.0	63. Andrews	96.5	30	7	23.3	2	6.7
27. Oak Hill	27.5	48	36	75.0	12	25.0	64. Jordan	98.8	32	7	21.9	2	6.3
28. Galindo	90.0	34	22	64.7	8	23.5	65. Becker	94.6	18	10	55.6	1	5.6
29. Cowan	40.0	30	24	80.0	7	23.3	66. Widen	96.6	39	10	25.6	2	5.1
30. Govalle	99.0	26	18	69.2	6	23.1	67. Houston	96.3	40	8	20.0	2	5.0
31. Boone	51.5	32	25	78.1	7	21.9	68. Sims	98.1	20	10	50.0	1	5.0
32. Mills	15.9	42	31	73.8	9	21.4	69. Allison	98.9	21	7	33.3	1	4.8
33. Campbell	99.1	29	20	69.0	6	20.7	70. St. Elmo	90.2	27	6	22.2	1	3.7
34. Hart	92.2	30	12	40.0	6	20.0	71. Oak Springs	98.6	30	12	40.0	1	3.3
35. Mathews	48.3	20	11	55.0	4	20.0	72. Pickle	99.3	33	9	27.3	1	3.0
36. Palm	89.7	35	13	37.1	7	20.0	73. Langford	90.9	40	9	22.5	1	2.5
37. Zavala	98.6	36	22	61.1	7	19.4	74. Allan	98.9	24	16	66.7	0	0.0

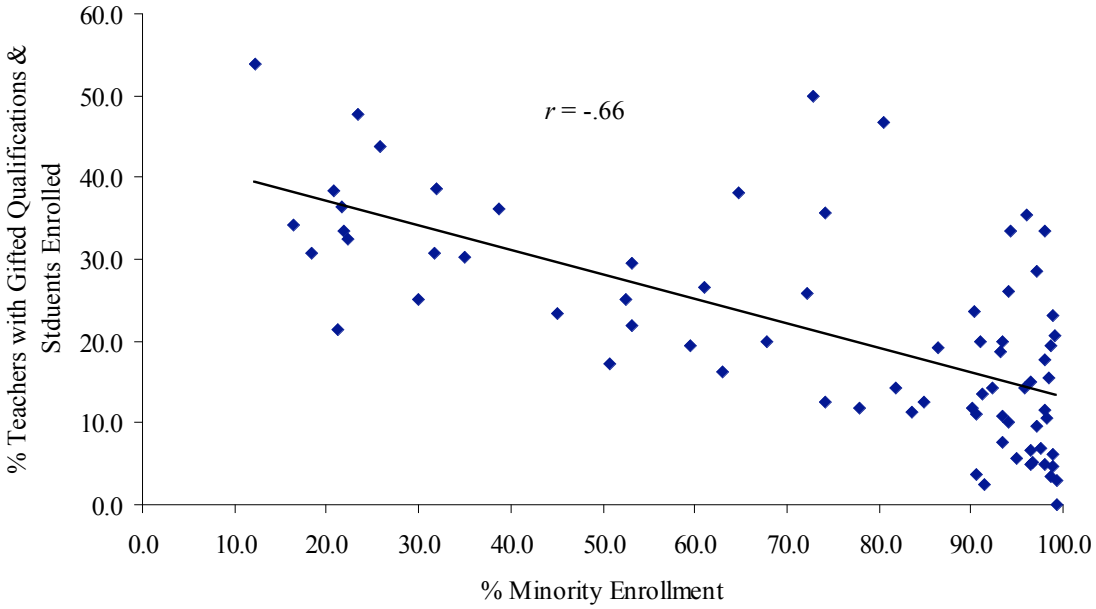
Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

[a]*N* = total number of teachers.

only 7 of the 15 teachers (46.7%) at Maplewood possessed gifted credentials *and* had gifted students enrolled in their classes. The percentage of teachers who possess gifted credentials who have gifted students in their classrooms ranged widely, from 53.8% (Highland Park, school no. 1) to 0.0% (Allan, school no. 74). Moreover, looking down the table, as the percentage of teachers with gifted credentials and gifted students in their classes decreases, the percent minority enrollment increases.

This apparent inverse relation between minority enrollment and qualified gifted education teachers with gifted students enrolled can be quantified mathematically by calculating a Pearson product-moment correlation between the percent minority enrollment and percent teachers with gifted credentials who have gifted students currently enrolled in their classrooms. The correlation coefficient obtained was -.66, indicating a significant association between minority enrollment and the percent of teachers with gifted credentials *actually teaching gifted students*. This correlational analysis is graphically represented by a scatterplot in Figure 5.2 (next page). As can be seen in the figure, as the percent minority enrollment increases, the percentage of teachers with gifted credentials and students enrolled in their classrooms decreases. That is, gifted students who attend predominantly minority enrollment schools are more likely to have a teacher without gifted credentials. The moderately strong negative association between minority enrollment and the percentage of teachers with gifted credentials who also have gifted students in their classrooms does not bode well for the prospects of *all* gifted students in predominantly minority enrollment schools. This association, however, has particular salience for gifted racial/ethnic minorities and gifted ELs.

Figure 5.2
Scatterplot of Correlation Between Percentage Minority Enrollment and Percentage of Teachers with Gifted Qualifications and Students Enrolled in AISD Elementary Schools (*N* = 74)



Given that racial/ethnic minority students, including ELs, comprise the majority of the total school enrollment in predominantly minority schools, they are less likely to receive gifted services from a teacher with the requisite qualifications to provide them. Thus, this association illustrates another facet of neglect at the secondary and tertiary levels.

Another important implication of the data presented in Table 5.6 and Figure 5.2 is the degree to which minority students (including ELs) are receiving gifted services from teachers who do not hold the qualifications to provide services for them. As of Fall 2003, there were 612 of the total 2,236 elementary teachers (27.4%) in AISD who had gifted children enrolled in their classrooms. There were 1,271 elementary teachers (56.8%), however, who had obtained at least the 30-hour Gifted Foundations requirements. Despite the *surplus* of elementary teachers in AISD *qualified* to teach gifted students, only 457 teachers (20.4%) *actually had* gifted students enrolled in their classrooms. I

calculated a disparity of 64.1% underutilization of gifted education teachers. This underutilization suggests that gifted minority and EL students may not be receiving the same quality of gifted services as gifted students attending classes with a teacher who has gifted credentials. This pattern of underutilization of qualified gifted education teachers in higher minority enrollment schools is also consistent with the pattern of underrepresentation of minority and EL students in gifted programs seen earlier in this chapter.

Despite the degree of underrepresentation of minorities and ELs in gifted programs, and the underutilization of qualified gifted education teachers in AISD, there are schools in AISD that appear to defy these patterns of neglect and are very successful in identifying and placing Latino EL students in gifted programs. I now turn to the two schools that participated in this case study, Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools.

Case Study

In the previous sections, I examined state- and district-level policies related to gifted education, and investigated teacher credentials in AISD. In this section, I present results for the case study of Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools. This section is organized as follows: (a) descriptive analysis of evaluation results; (b) disparity analysis of incidence rates of nominations; (c) school and personnel profiles; (d) content analysis of semi-structured interviews; (e) observational analysis.

Descriptive Analysis of Evaluation Results

To examine student evaluation data, I received permission from the principals of both Palm and Wooldridge to review the Student Identification Profile for each student nominated for the gifted program in the 2002-2003 school year (see Appendix B for a blank form). In 2002-2003, 22 Latino students were nominated for the gifted program at Palm, and 17 Latino students were nominated at Wooldridge. These data are presented in Table 5.7. Of these 39 Latino students nominated for the gifted program, 16 were accepted at Palm, and 10 students were accepted at Wooldridge.

Table 5.7
Number of Latino and EL Students Nominated and Accepted at Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools, 2002-2003

	Total Nominated	Latinos Accepted	ELs Accepted
Palm	22	16	6
Wooldridge	17	10	8
Total:	39	26	14

At Palm, 6 of these 16 students were EL students, while at Wooldridge, 8 of the 10 students were EL students. I compiled evaluation data for all EL Latino students accepted into the gifted program (see Table 4.5, p. 77 for a list of evaluation measures; see Appendix G for a brief description of each assessment battery measure). Initially, I calculated descriptive statistics for each measure (i.e., mean; standard deviation; median; mode) for each school separately (Palm; $N = 6$ students; Wooldridge; $N = 8$ students). I performed a *t*-test for each measure to test group mean differences between the groups of gifted EL students in the two schools. These data are presented in Table 5.8 (next page).

Table 5.8
T-Test Results of Gifted Evaluation Data for Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools, 2002-2003

Measure	Palm	Wooldridge	*p*-value
Bilingual Verbal Ability Test, Bilingual Verbal Ability (BVA)	98.3	89.4	0.224
Bilingual Verbal Ability Test, English Language Proficiency (ELP)	86.3	60.4	0.021
Raven's Progressive Matrices	83.2	79.6	0.626
Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale	95.0	90.3	0.198
Adapted Academic Scale (Language Arts)	47.0	49.6	0.628
Adapted Academic Scale (Math)	57.0	51.0	0.062
Adapted Academic Scale (Science)	46.2	47.1	0.901
Adapted Academic Scale (Social Studies)	47.8	43.0	0.501
Student portfolio rating (Language Arts)	1.7	2.5	0.247
Student portfolio rating (Math)	3.0	2.6	0.351
Student portfolio rating (Science)	1.2	1.5	0.640
Student portfolio rating (Social Studies)	1.2	1.9	0.319

$\alpha < .004$

For every measure, the *t*-test was non-significant, indicating that the two groups do not differ from one another.[3] For this reason, I pooled the two groups together for the descriptive statistical analysis. I then recalculated the descriptive statistics for each measure listed above. These data are presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9
Descriptive Statistics of EL Students (N =14) Accepted to the Gifted Program at Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools: 2002-2003

Measure	Mean	*SD*	Median	Mode
Bilingual Verbal Ability Test, Bilingual Verbal Ability ($M = 100$, $SD = 15$)	93.2	13.8	91.5	87.0
Bilingual Verbal Ability Test, English Language Proficiency ($M = 100$, $SD = 15$)	71.5	22.6	71.5	65.0
Raven's Progressive Matrices (percentile rank)	81.1	13.7	85.5	87.0
Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale (TABS; total score = 100)	92.3	6.9	94.0	100.0
Adapted Academic Scale (Language Arts; total score = 60)	48.8	8.1	52.0	56.0
Adapted Academic Scale (Math; total score = 60)	53.6	6.5	55.0	55.0
Adapted Academic Scale (Science; total score = 60)	46.8	10.9	51.0	57.0
Adapted Academic Scale (Social Studies; total score = 60)	44.8	11.2	46.0	51.0
Student portfolio rating (Language Arts; total score = 3)	2.1	1.2	3.0	3.0
Student portfolio rating (Math; total score = 3)	2.8	0.8	3.0	3.0
Student portfolio rating (Science; total score = 3)	1.4	1.3	1.5	0.0
Student portfolio rating (Social Studies; total score = 3)	1.6	1.3	2.0	3.0

Note. *SD* = Standard Deviation.

Regarding the BVAT, gifted EL students at Palm and Wooldridge had a mean standard score of 93.2 in bilingual verbal ability, and a mean standard score of 71.5 in English language proficiency. These two means on the BVAT indicate that gifted ELs in

Palm and Wooldridge, as a group, performed in the average range in bilingual verbal ability, but scored below average in English language proficiency. These results are not surprising, given that these students were classified as ELs. Furthermore, the standard deviations of both these distributions were very large, 13.8 and 22.6 points, respectively, indicating a wide dispersion of scores on these two measures. The median and mode for these distributions were also close to their respective means (BVA: Median = 91.5; Mode = 87.0; ELP: Median = 61.5, Mode = 65.0).

With respect to the Raven, the mean percentile rank score for the gifted EL students at Palm and Wooldridge was the 81st percentile, indicating that the gifted EL students, as a group, showed strong nonverbal abilities as measured by the Raven. As with the BVAT distributions, the standard deviation for the distribution on the Raven was large (14 percentile points), indicating a wide dispersion around the mean. The median and mode for the distribution was also above the mean (Median = 86th percentile; Mode = 87th percentile), suggesting that this distribution has a slight negative skew.

As listed in Table 5.9, behavioral and student product measures included the Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale (TABS), Adapted Academic Scales (AAS), and student portfolio ratings. With respect to the TABS, the mean total TABS score was 92.3 out of 100 points, with a standard deviation of 6.9 points. The median TABS score was 94.0 points, and the mode was 100.0 points. On the AAS, the mean scale scores for the gifted EL students ranged from 44.8 points (Social Studies) to 53.6 points (Mathematics), out of a possible 60 points. Standard deviations ranged from 6.5 points (Mathematics) to 11.2 points (Social Studies). Regarding the student portfolio ratings, the mean portfolio

ratings for the gifted EL students ranged from 1.4 (Science) to 2.8 (Mathematics), and standard deviations ranged from 0.8 (Mathematics) to 1.3 points (Science and Social Studies). Furthermore, the medians and modes were higher than the means for the TABS and all four content areas on both the AAS and student portfolio ratings, indicating a slight negative skew in the distributions.

Despite the promising results obtained via descriptive analysis of the evaluation results of EL students successfully identified at Palm and Wooldridge, there are some concerns regarding the psychometric adequacy of the instruments used in the assessment process. In Appendix G, I provide a brief description of each instrument used in the gifted evaluation process, listing psychometric data where available.

The first three instruments listed in Appendix G, the Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT), the Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT), and the Raven's Progressive Matrices, are all objective, standardized measures. As such, there are normative and psychometric data available to examine their clinical utility. Based upon review of normative and psychometric evidence, the CogAT appears to demonstrate adequate psychometric strength for assessment and selection purposes. The CogAT, however, is an *English*-language instrument, thus its psychometric integrity is irrelevant concerning EL students. The BVAT is a bilingual measure, and appears to have greater utility in terms of assessing EL students' language abilities. Wilkinson and Ortiz (2000) noted, however, that the developers of the BVAT described the Bilingual Verbal Ability (BVA) score as "the level of English language ability that would be demonstrated by the bilingual if all of that person's language abilities were available in English" (Muñoz-Sandoval et al., 1998, p. 61).

Based on this assumption, the developers concluded that for monolingual-English speakers, the BVA score is equal to the English Language Proficiency (ELP) score. Thus, it was appropriate to use the BVA as a comparable measure of verbal ability in bilingual populations to extrapolate from normative data obtained from monolingual-English speakers to establish norms and validate the BVAT. Wilkinson and Ortiz questioned this assumption, noting that the bilingual testing procedure was not used in the standardization of the BVAT, and only one reliability study conducted with 542 Spanish-speaking bilingual students was reported in the manual. As such, Wilkinson and Ortiz cautioned that there is very little psychometric information based on bilingual administrations available for the BVAT. They continued that great care must be taken when making educational decisions, and that further research on the BVAT is needed to establish reliability and validity across ages, levels of proficiency, and to determining whether norms established for monolingual English-speaking individuals are appropriate for bilingual populations.

The questionable nature of the BVAT's standardization raises concerns as to what the obtained scores contribute to the overall assessment of EL students for gifted programs. This issue, coupled with problems with the BVAT raised by GSC members in the observational analysis (to be presented later), calls into the question its utility as an assessment tool for gifted evaluations. The Raven, in contrast to the other two standardized measures, appears to have both adequate psychometric integrity and appropriate norms. Furthermore, there is some empirical research that supports the utility of the Raven as an assessment tool for gifted minorities (Mills & Tissot, 1995; see Chapter 3, pp. 51-52 for brief review of this study).

The last three instruments described in Appendix G, the Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale, the Adapted Academic Scales, and student portfolios, present greater problems regarding the psychometric integrity of these assessment tools. Although all three measures attempt to provide some quantifiable index of observed student performance, none of these instruments are standardized. As such, these measures are completely subjective, and could introduce bias into the assessment process on the part of teachers or evaluators. That is, there is no normative data to interpret the scores obtained on these measures relative to peers. Higher ratings on these scales may also be indicative of observer bias rather than giftedness, given that teachers complete these instruments. Moreover, there is no empirical evidence available to establish the reliability or validity of these instruments, further illustrating their weaknesses as assessment tools.

In sum, gifted EL students, based on the descriptive statistical analysis of the combined gifted EL student profiles at Palm and Wooldridge, display a number of characteristics. First, gifted EL students, as expected, perform on the BVAT in the average range in bilingual verbal ability, but demonstrate limited English proficiency. In addition, these students display strong nonverbal abilities, as evidenced by above average performance on the Raven. Gifted ELs also rate very highly on behavioral and academic ratings scales, and demonstrate at least above average work in all four content areas. Nevertheless, there are serious questions regarding the psychometric integrity of many of instruments utilized by AISD to assess students for the gifted program.

Disparity Analysis of Incidence Rates of Nominations

In the previous section, I examined student profiles from Palm and Wooldridge to build a composite of the typical gifted EL Latino student. In addition to the characteristics that EL Latino students demonstrate that might indicate they are gifted, the degree to which teachers or parents nominate them for evaluation will affect how successful a school is at identifying EL Latinos as gifted and placing them in the gifted program. Based upon student profile data I reviewed for the previous section, I calculated incidence rates for each racial/ethnic group. These data are presented in Table 5.10 (next page). In 2002-2003, Palm had a total student enrollment of 716 students. Of these 716 students, 32 students were nominated in 2002-2003 for the gifted program.[4] Disaggregating the total enrollment by race/ethnicity, there were 65 White students enrolled at Palm, constituting 9.1% of the total enrollment. Regarding gifted nominations, 9 White students were nominated in 2002-2003, comprising 28.1% of the nominations, for an overrepresentation rate of 208.9%. There were 92 African American students at Palm, constituting 12.8% of the total enrollment. In contrast to the number of nominations of White students, however, only 1 African American student was nominated in 2002-2003, comprising only 3.1% of the gifted nominations, for a disparity of 75.7% underrepresentation. With respect to Latino students, I disaggregated the Latino population into non-EL and EL components. Non-EL Latinos constituted 44.4% of the total enrollment at Palm, with 318 students enrolled. Of these 318 non-EL Latino students, 9 were nominated for the gifted program, comprising 28.1% of the nominations for 2002-2003, for an *underrepresentation* of 36.7%.

Table 5.10

Disparity Analysis of Gifted Nominations by Race/Ethnicity for Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools: 2002-2003

School	*N*	Nominations	White					African American					Non-EL Latino					EL Latino				
			Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-	Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-	Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-	Enrollment		Gifted		Dis-
		n	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity %[a]	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity %[a]	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity %[a]	*n*	%	*n*	%	parity %[a]
Palm	716	32	65	9.1	9	28.1	+208.9	92	12.8	1	3.1	-75.7	318	44.4	9	28.1	-36.7	232	32.4	13	40.6	+25.4
Wooldridge	732	22	50	6.8	2	9.1	+33.1	91	12.4	3	13.6	+8.8	136	18.6	4	18.2	-2.1	432	59.0	13	59.1	+0.1

[a]In the "Disparity %" category, a plus sign (+) indicates overrepresentation and a minus sign (-) indicates underrepresentation.

For the EL Latino students, there were 232 students enrolled in Palm, representing 32.4% of the total enrollment. Regarding the gifted nominations, 13 EL Latino students were nominated in 2002-2003, comprising 40.6% of the nominations, an *overrepresentation* of 25.4%.

This pattern of the EL Latino nomination rate greater than the non-EL Latino nomination rate at Palm defies the typical pattern of tertiary-level neglect, indicating that EL Latinos are being nominated at relatively higher rates than their proportion in the school enrollment at Palm. It is important to note, however, that the secondary level of neglect (non-EL Latinos) appears to be exacerbated, even as the tertiary level (EL Latinos) is improving. It is also important to note, however, that because Whites and African Americans comprise relatively small proportions of the total school enrollment, even small changes in the number of students nominated for the gifted program from either group will have dramatic effects on disparity rates for all groups. As such, the substantial overrepresentation of White students nominated (n = 9 students) contributed, in part, to the underrepresentation of non-EL Latino nominations. Nevertheless, the improvement of tertiary-level neglect at the expense of the secondary level is cause for concern.

In 2002-2003, Wooldridge had a total student enrollment of 732 students. Of these 732 students, 22 students were nominated in 2002-2003 for the gifted program. Disaggregating the total enrollment by race/ethnicity, there were 50 White students enrolled at Wooldridge, constituting 6.8% of the total enrollment. Regarding gifted nominations, 2 White students were nominated in 2002-2003, comprising 9.1% of the

nominations, for an overrepresentation rate of 33.1%. There were 91 African American students at Wooldridge, constituting 12.4% of the total enrollment. As to gifted nominations, 3 African American students were nominated in 2002-2003, comprising 13.6% of the gifted nominations, for a disparity of 9.7% *overrepresentation*. With respect to Latino students, non-EL Latinos constituted 18.6% of the total enrollment at Wooldridge, with 136 students enrolled. Of these 136 non-EL Latino students, 4 were nominated for the gifted program, comprising 18.2% of the nominations for 2002-2003, for a slight underrepresentation of 2.1%. For the EL Latino students, there were 452 students enrolled in Wooldridge, representing 59.0% of the total enrollment. Regarding the gifted nominations, 13 EL Latino students were nominated in 2002-2003, comprising 59.1% of the nominations, for a near-parity overrepresentation of 0.1%.

Regarding racial/ethnic disparities, Wooldridge also illustrates the typical pattern of White overrepresentation in terms of gifted nominations. The degree of overrepresentation at Wooldridge (33.1%), however, was much smaller than at Palm (208.9%). For African American students, Wooldridge had a slight overrepresentation, 9.7%, contrary to the typical pattern of African American underrepresentation. With respect to non-EL Latino and EL Latino groups, Wooldridge also defied the pattern of the tertiary level of neglect, demonstrating the EL Latino > non-EL Latino disparity. Moreover, the calculated disparities for non-EL Latinos (2.1% underrepresentation) and EL Latinos (0.1% overrepresentation) were very close to parity, indicating that Wooldridge is nominating students from these two subgroups at rates very close to their proportion of the total school population.

Although both Palm and Wooldridge are nominating EL Latino students for the gifted program at relatively high rates, Wooldridge appears to be nominating students from the various racial/ethnic groups at rates closer to their proportion of the total school enrollment. Palm, by contrast, has an underrepresentation of non-EL Latino nominations. One possible explanation for this difference in disparities may lie in the relative proportions of non-EL and EL Latinos in both schools. As noted in Table 5.10, the relative percentages of non-EL Latinos and EL Latinos at Palm are different from those at Wooldridge. Non-EL Latinos constitute 44.4% of the school population at Palm, but only 18.6% at Wooldridge, while EL Latinos constitute 32.4% of Palm's enrollment, but *59.0%* of Wooldridge's enrollment. As such, the number of EL Latino students at Wooldridge is more than 3 times larger than the number of non-EL Latinos. Thus, the higher nomination rate of EL Latinos, compared to the nomination rate of non-EL Latinos, mirrors their relative percentages of the total school population. At Palm, however, the non-EL Latino population is 12% larger than the EL Latino population. Thus, a higher EL Latino nomination rate, compared to the non-EL Latino nomination rate, mathematically guarantees an underrepresentation of non-EL Latinos at Palm. Furthermore, the enormous overrepresentation of White nominations at Palm reduces the relative percentage of both non-EL and EL nominations, exacerbating the non-EL disparity. In sum, although Palm is nominating EL Latinos at a high rate, to avoid the secondary level of neglect, non-EL Latinos must be nominated at a higher rate than EL Latinos.

School and Personnel Characteristics

School characteristics. Based on 2002-2003 PEIMS data, Palm and Wooldridge have very similar demographic profiles, as shown in Table 5.11. Both schools have very comparable total enrollments, with 716 and 732 students, respectively. The proportion of each racial/ethnic group in both schools is also very similar. Latinos constitute slightly more than three-quarters of the total school enrollment in each school. African Americans are the next largest group, comprising nearly 13% of each school. Finally, the combined proportion of the other three groups comprises about 10% at each school.

Table 5.11
Demographic Profile of Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools, 2002-2003

	Palm		Wooldridge	
Ethnic Group	*n*	%	*n*	%
Latino	550	76.8	568	77.6
African American	92	12.8	91	12.4
White	65	9.1	50	6.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	9	1.3	21	2.9
American Indian	0	0.0	2	0.3
Total:	716	100.0	732	100.0

Source: Texas Education Agency (2003).

As noted in the methods section, both schools were selected to participate in this study based on two selection criteria — (a) comparatively large numbers of gifted EL Latinos and (b) high Latino enrollment. In addition to having very similar demographic profiles, Palm and Wooldridge Schools met the first selection criterion, with 12 gifted EL Latinos in each school, the largest number of gifted EL Latinos of any school in AISD (see Table 4.3, p. 74). In addition, both schools also met the second selection criterion, with Latino students the overwhelming majority in both schools, comprising 76.8% and 77.6% of the total student enrollment in Palm and Wooldridge, respectively.

Personnel characteristics. In Chapter 4, I reported that 7 bilingual education teachers participated in this study — 4 from Palm, and 3 from Wooldridge. Although these teachers represent a small proportion of all the teachers at each school (4 of 35 teachers at Palm, 11.4%; 3 of 32 teachers at Wooldridge, 9.4%), it is important to reiterate that the target population of this dissertation is EL Latino students. Therefore, bilingual education teachers are the most appropriate respondents regarding the nomination and evaluation of EL Latino students for the gifted program (hereafter, "teachers" refers exclusively to bilingual education teachers). Based upon background information provided by the teachers in their interviews, a number of commonalities appeared among the teachers' backgrounds. These commonalities include: years of teaching experience, teaching credentials, years of teaching experience with gifted students, and reasons for becoming involved in gifted education.

The first commonality among the 7 participating teachers concerns years of teaching experience. The median number of years of teaching experience for the teachers at Palm and Wooldridge was very similar, 13.0 and 15.0 years, respectively. The median was the most appropriate measure of central tendency, because one participating teacher in each school had more than 10 years of teaching experience beyond the other teachers, thus artificially elevating the mean (Palm, M = 14.8 years; Wooldridge, M = 21.0 years).

With respect to the second commonality (teaching credentials) among the participating teachers, given that the participating teachers are in bilingual education, it is not surprising that all seven teachers are certified in elementary education and bilingual/ESL education. However, six of the seven teachers also possess gifted teaching

credentials. As such, these teachers can provide gifted education services to gifted students in their classrooms. Regarding the third commonality (years of teaching experience with gifted students), the median number of years for the participating teachers in both schools was also very similar, 5.0 and 6.5 years, respectively.

The fourth commonality among the participating teachers was their reasons for becoming involved in gifted education. Although each teacher gave several reasons for becoming involved in gifted education, two themes appeared in *all seven* teachers' interview responses (see question no. 12, Appendix D). The first theme that appeared was a developing awareness of gifted children's abilities over the course of their careers. Each teacher related stories about gifted students they had taught, often expressing a sense of wonder and awe at what these children could accomplish. The teachers noted that these experiences served as an impetus for them to learn more about giftedness, and to seek gifted education credentials. One teacher commented:

> Some of the students I was getting in my class were already labeled G/T [gifted/talented] and I enjoyed working with them, and knowing that if I wasn't certified G/T, I wouldn't be allowed to have them in my class. For AISD, you have to be a G/T certified teacher to have G/T students in your class.

Another teacher described her interest in gifted education as follows:

> I knew that I had some kids to challenge, and I was kind of "what do I do with these kids?" Maybe at the beginning it was more for myself to be prepared to serve all my kids, and not have them pulled out to other classes. I wanted to serve my own kids.

From these responses, it is clear that the participating teachers in this study bring many years of experience to their teaching, both as bilingual education *and* gifted education teachers.

In addition to commonalities among the backgrounds of the participating bilingual education teachers, there were also commonalities between the two principals of both Palm and Wooldridge. These similarities include years of teaching experience and teaching credentials. Based upon the background information the principals provided in their interviews, both principals each possess over 30 years of teaching experience in AISD schools. As such, both principals bring a wealth of experience to their positions as principals. Another important similarity both principals share concerns their teaching credentials. During their teaching careers, *before* advancing to administrative positions, both principals obtained gifted education credentials. In their interviews, the principals commented that they desired to challenge themselves professionally, and thus they obtained gifted credentials so that they could teach more advanced students. Both principals also reported that they served as the G/T Advocate at their respective schools during their tenure as assistant principals as part of their professional development. These experiences of working with gifted students, both as teachers and G/T Advocates prior to becoming principals, very likely provided a strong foundation for the principals in their commitment to the gifted programs in their schools.

In sum, the study respondents, the bilingual education teachers and principals from both Palm and Wooldridge, share a number of remarkably similar characteristics in their backgrounds: collective years of teaching experience and professional development

(in regular education and gifted education), and interest in gifted education. These similarities in background characteristics may translate into similar attitudes about giftedness, particularly attitudes about EL Latino gifted students. Moreover, these similarities across the two schools may help explain, in part, the similar results both schools have achieved in identifying and placing higher numbers of EL Latinos in the gifted program than other schools in AISD.

Content Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews

As noted in Chapter 4, I conducted interviews with the bilingual education teachers, principals, and G/T Advocates at Palm and Wooldridge to examine the policies and procedures of these two schools for identifying gifted children, particularly gifted EL Latinos. I collected interview data to investigate the Structural factor, School-Community Relations, and Teacher Participation interactions described in my conceptual model in Chapter 3 (see Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1, pp. 44-45). To investigate the Assessment factor and Parent Nominations interaction, I conducted observations of the Gifted Selection Committee at both schools to collect data. The results of this observational analysis are discussed later in the chapter.

To analyze the interview data, I utilized a content analysis approach, identifying 13 themes to code and analyze the data and operationalize the Structural factor and 2 of the 3 interactions among the three factors discussed in my conceptual model. The coding procedures are described in Chapter 4 (p. 86). The 13 themes are listed in Table 5.12 (next page; see Appendix F for a full listing of the themes, their conceptual descriptions,

and model responses for each category). Once the coding categories were identified, I placed them in the appropriate factor based on my conceptual model. This content analysis of my conceptual model is presented in Figure 5.3 (next page).

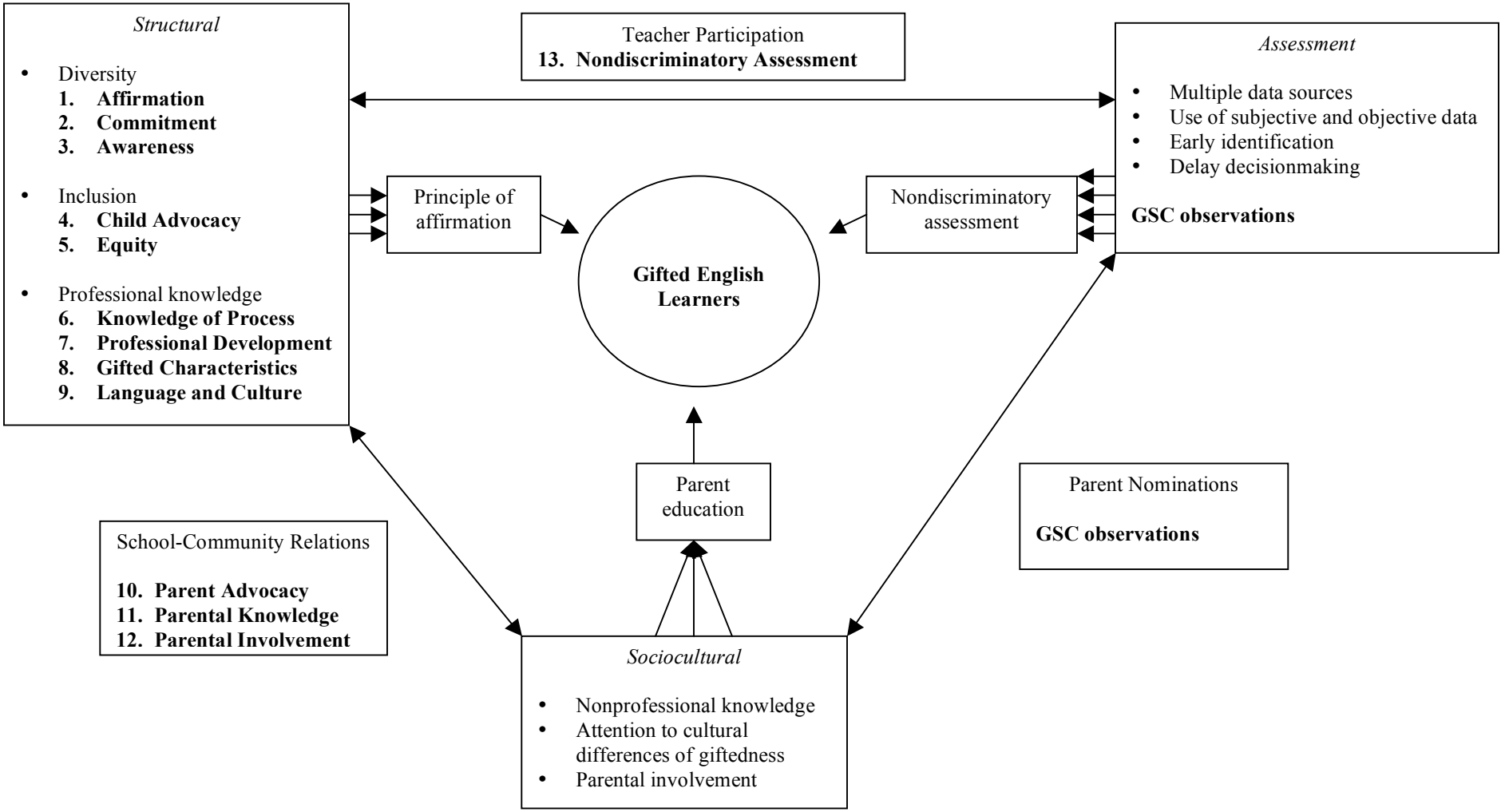
Table 5.12
Content Analysis Coding Categories

1. Affirmation
2. Commitment
3. Awareness
4. Child Advocacy
5. Equity
6. Knowledge of Process
7. Professional Development
8. Gifted Characteristics
9. Language and Culture
10. Parent Advocacy
11. Parental Knowledge
12. Parental Involvement
13. Nondiscriminatory Assessment

Structural factor. I placed 9 of the 13 coding categories into the Structural factor. As I stated in Chapter 3, the Structural factor is defined in terms of the ways in which the systems in a school are organized that can enhance or discourage the identification of gifted EL Latinos. Based on my conceptual model, the Structural factor consists of three principles, "Diversity," "Inclusion," and "Professional Knowledge." As such, the categories assigned to these principles to operationalize the factor illustrate the beliefs and perspectives of the respondents that affect school personnel's ability to successfully identify gifted EL Latino students.

1) *Diversity*. The Diversity principle, as stated in my conceptual model, reads: "The focus should be on the diversity within gifted populations." Three themes emerged that address this principle, labeled "Affirmation," "Commitment," and "Awareness." I begin with the Affirmation theme.

Figure 5.3
Content Analysis of Conceptual Model



Note. GSC = Gifted Selection Committee.

Affirmation concerns the idea that gifted ELs exist and can be identified. For this theme, both principals and all seven bilingual education teachers supported this assertion. The principals proved to be very dynamic in affirming the existence of gifted EL Latinos. In their interviews, the principals conveyed a strong determination to demonstrate that there are gifted students on their campuses, particularly EL Latino students.[5] The principals cogently articulated the idea of affirmation in the following statements:

- When I came here and I saw the low numbers of students that were in [the] G/T [program], especially bilingual. The numbers were very small, and I thought, "There's no way." I *know* there's got to be more G/T kids than this.
- I think one of the very first things I said to staff when I came onto this campus was, "We need to look at our bilingual children, because, as far as I'm concerned, any child that is learning two languages, and functioning in two languages, there's a gifted piece there." It's not easy to do that. With the population I have here [bilingual children], there *has* to be gifted children! You have to acknowledge and honor that.

This affirmation espoused by the principals also translates into the policies they have instituted at their schools. Such policies include: (a) encouraging teachers, particularly the bilingual education teachers, to obtain gifted credentials, (b) exhorting teachers to nominate more EL students for the gifted program, (c) ensuring that at least one bilingual education teacher serve on the gifted selection committee, and (d) including gifted education issues in staff meetings.

From the interview data, gifted education is clearly a top priority for these two principals. Moreover, these principals acknowledge that EL students are just as likely to be gifted and can be identified. Given that principals are the chief administrative officers of their schools, it is their perspectives, beliefs, and leadership that help shape the school climate, thus exerting a strong influence on the staff.

As noted earlier, all seven bilingual education teachers also supported the theme of Affirmation in their interviews (hereafter, "teachers" refers to the participating bilingual education teachers). The teachers seemed to convey a matter-of-fact demeanor regarding the existence of gifted EL students, commenting that they had worked with gifted EL students and had nominated such students. Some of the teachers speculated that if they had never had any experience with gifted EL children, they might be less resolute in their convictions that there are gifted ELs in their school. One teacher noted, however, that to think "ELs cannot be gifted is ridiculous. I know they're out there."

It is also important to note that six of the seven teachers are Latinas. As such, the notion of "shared identity" is particularly salient for these teachers in relation to the idea of affirmation. Regarding shared identity, Valencia and Aburto (1991) commented: "Latino teachers are likely to have some advantage teaching and enhancing the learning of Latino students, with whom they share similar backgrounds" (p. 172; cited in Valencia, 2002a). Some of the teachers related stories from their early schooling experiences in which they received little language support, and perceived that their teachers had low expectations for them. These early experiences very likely served as an impetus for these teachers to provide better support for their students. Given that these

teachers also came from Spanish-speaking homes, they are more likely to have a better understanding of the experiences their students bring to the classroom. In addition to the Latina bilingual education teachers sharing similar backgrounds with their students, these teachers also might serve to pass their shared cultural heritage to their students, enhance EL students' ethnic pride, and act as role models for EL students' future aspirations.

The teachers also conveyed a sense of camaraderie with respect to gifted ELs. Nearly all the teachers expressed that their students often were viewed as less capable, thus they felt a sense of protectiveness for their students. As such, the teachers felt compelled to advocate for their students, strongly asserting that bilingual children can be gifted. This sentiment was conveyed with comments such as:

- I have to convince some of the higher grade teachers that just because they [bilingual students] don't know English doesn't mean they are not gifted.
- Sometimes they [bilingual students] come from Mexico with very little to no schooling, and people think, "There is no way they could be G/T, because they can't do anything." They think, "He's not on level, so he can't be G/T." I think that's part of it. But it's not that he's not on level; look where he started and where he is now. He's learned two years of schooling in three months.
- I know that they [bilingual students] need all the support they can get. With all the baggage and all the language barriers that come with staying in the United States for a Spanish speaker, and the socioeconomics and everything, for a kid like that to achieve over everybody is great, and you can't ignore it.

There is clear evidence that the theme of Affirmation is present at both Palm and Wooldridge. From interview data, principals and teachers alike at these two schools espouse the assertion that gifted EL Latino students do indeed exist and can be identified. Support for this affirmation is further evidenced by the policies instituted by the principals, the nominations of Latino EL students for the gifted program that the teachers routinely make, and the resultant fact that Latino EL students are actually enrolled in the gifted programs at these two schools.

The second theme that emerged from the interview data, Commitment, concerns the notion that school personnel are committed to improving the representation of ELs in the gifted program. One example of this commitment is expressed by an event one principal related in her interview that occurred before she took over as principal at her school:

> I don't remember who said it to me, but I remember this statement, because I was going to be interim principal, and they said, "When you go to [name of school], G/T won't be an issue." I was shocked! It's just that people don't understand because they can't speak the language. That always stayed in the back of my mind, and I said, "Well, no, it *is* going to be an issue for me, because I'm going to make it my priority."

As with the previous theme of Affirmation, both principals' commitment to improving EL representation in the gifted program also had a strong influence on the policies they institute. One principal commented:

What I know I have done is to encourage the teachers to get G/T certified, to complete the hours, and I have encouraged the staff to spend more time talking, and looking at student work, and comparing student work. But we've also bumped up the expectations on what the Spanish-speaking students should do on a daily basis. Upping our expectations has made us more aware of what is going on with all of our children, not just the bilingual children.

These policies also influence teachers' perspectives and commitment to improving the representation of ELs in the gifted program. Teachers specifically commented that the principal's commitment to improving the gifted program has had an effect on them. For example, one teacher voiced:

- Our principal is very gung-ho for rigor in the classroom, pushing the kids as much as they can, and not holding them back because of the language, socioeconomics; none of that counts in here. We have to get them up there with the rest.
- I think since we've had [name of principal], more focus has been on G/T, even though it's not her thing. She's not in charge of it. The assistant principal is in charge of it, but she kind of oversees that, and makes sure that people know what's up.

Teachers also conveyed a sense of empowerment expressing their own desires to help improve the gifted program. They related a number of methods they have employed to increase the number of EL students nominated for the gifted program. Such methods include working more closely with parents to complete nomination forms, serving on the Gifted Selection Committee (GSC), and maintaining their gifted credentials.

The third theme that emerged, Awareness, relates to respondents' awareness of improvements, past history, or inequities in the gifted program. An example of this theme can be seen in one principal's comments on the status of the gifted program before she became principal:

> I know my predecessor, for whatever reason, you have to understand she was dealing with bringing the school up from being low-performing. G/T may not have been one of her areas of importance. If it had been me, I'd be working to get my school off the low-performing list too, had I been in her shoes.

Throughout the interviews, respondents displayed an awareness of the changes that have occurred in their school regarding the gifted programs. Teachers seemed most keenly aware of the changes the principals had implemented, becoming reflective at times. One teacher related the attitudes towards gifted minorities when she first began teaching at her school:

> When I got here, we knew we were very low on minority G/T nominations. At that time they [school personnel] didn't really talk about it. I think even the principal at that time, if it was brought up, she said something like "Well, all the kids are gifted." So it was pretty much her attitude that all kids are gifted, so you teach them all the same. And if you're going to have a principal saying that, then what does that tell the rest of us? "Don't bother."

It is also important to note that, unlike the other two themes of Affirmation and Commitment, only four of the teachers and both principals provided responses that were coded with this theme of Awareness. Nevertheless, Awareness captured a historical

perspective that is present among at least some of the school personnel with regards to the gifted program. This awareness expressed by the teachers and principals has very likely served as a reminder of past problems with identifying EL students, and has provided an impetus to continue striving to improve their programs.

In sum, there is evidence for the first principle of the Structural factor, Diversity, based on responses provided by the participating teachers and principals at Palm and Wooldridge. The school personnel of these schools clearly focus on diversity in their gifted program through their affirmation and acknowledgement of gifted ELs, their commitment to improving access to the gifted program for ELs, and a keen awareness of the continuing process such improvement entails.

2) *Inclusion*. The second principle from my conceptual model reads: "The goal should be inclusion, rather than exclusion, of students." Two themes emerged that address this principle, labeled "Child Advocacy," and "Equity."

The first theme, Child Advocacy, involves school personnel's concerns for the best interests of the child. Teachers provided the majority of responses coded for these two themes, given that they had the most contact with students. Teachers' responses primarily involved providing the best possible services they could for their students. Each teacher seemed to have a sense of urgency in her interview with this topic, recognizing that gifted students have individual needs that may not be met in the regular curriculum. One teacher described her concerns as follows:

> The G/T kids always get overlooked, because "She's gonna get it, or he's gonna get it, so I don't have to worry about how to teach you." And that's awful. I'm

> glad there is a G/T program that gives them something to do on their level, that challenges them, keeps them interested, because they're probably at risk for dropping out, too. They get bored with education.

This sense of urgency seemed particularly powerful concerning gifted EL children, as many of the teachers commented that it was often difficult to get bilingual materials for gifted students. This concern ties very strongly into the second theme, Equity.

Equity is concerned with the idea that improving access to the gifted program for EL students improves the educational opportunities for *all* EL children. Here, five of the seven teachers and both principals provided a number of responses that were coded for this theme. For the teachers, many of their responses centered around two complementary ideas: difficulties in providing resources for gifted ELs, and benefits for EL students not classified as gifted derived from exposure to gifted materials and strategies. One teacher captured the first concern very poignantly:

> My biggest concern is being able to provide the children an equal, and equitable education, a G/T education in Spanish equal to English, just to find an equitable way to do those things. This is important to me because we find a way to do that in our regular teaching, we find a way that's equitable, and if we don't find a way that's equitable, then we're not servicing them and taking them to their full potential. It's just kind of half done. Like you can only get this much because you speak Spanish, and these things are not available to you. It's kind of the same on the other end of the spectrum; we don't have a bilingual resource teacher here. However, the kids need resource services. I think it's the same for G/T; there

> should a bilingual component to that. One that's equitable to them. I think a lot of times the bilingual community, or the bilingual students don't always get the equal treatment.

Each of the five responding teachers echoed similar sentiments, recognizing the need for more bilingual gifted materials for their students. Remarkably, these same teachers also commented that their efforts to include EL students in the gifted program has had the effect of exposing more of their students to gifted strategies and materials by challenging them as bilingual education teachers to incorporate gifted instructional strategies in their classrooms. Another teacher expressed this notion eloquently:

> I think they [gifted ELs] bring more expertise to the bilingual teachers. You are supposed to be prepared for these kids, so when you're prepared for a certain population, that kind of trickles for the rest of the population.

In terms of materials for gifted ELs, another teacher related a story in which she had a gifted EL student doing research on a science project and needed reference materials (e.g., encyclopedia; dictionary). In the course of tracking down and borrowing a Spanish-language encyclopedia from a local university, she discovered that the rest of her students also benefited from having access to this material, and thus she decided to purchase one for herself. She commented: "Suddenly, all my students had so many science questions, and finally I had a place to send them to look it up. It was wonderful!"

In sum, these two themes, Child Advocacy and Equity, provide ample support for the Inclusion principle at Palm and Wooldridge. Teachers and principals both recognize their ELs can benefit from the opportunities offered by gifted education, and strive to

make them a equally accessible as possible. One principal explained this notion of inclusion best:

> I think what it [gifted education] does is enhance the instruction for every child on the campus, because for several years the District has said, "Don't just teach gifted strategies to gifted students, those strategies are good for every child." That was happening in the English classrooms, but if you don't have children identified in the bilingual classrooms as gifted, many times those strategies won't happen. As the teachers became more knowledgeable, and as we are identifying bilingual children as gifted, then that's increasing the exposure of all children to the high-level questions, the higher-level student work, and I think that's an important piece.

3) *Professional knowledge*. The third principle of the Structural factor in my conceptual model reads: "Professionals… who represent various areas of expertise and who are knowledgeable about behavioral indicators of giftedness should be involved." This principle had the most support of any of the principles listed in my conceptual model, with four themes emerging from interview data, "Knowledge of Process," "Professional Development," "Gifted Characteristics," and "Language & Culture." Furthermore, every teacher and principal provided responses that were coded for three of the four themes. Only one teacher did not provide a response that was coded for the Professional Development theme.

Regarding the first theme, Knowledge of Process, school personnel were asked to describe, as best they knew, the process of evaluating a student for possible placement in

the gifted program. Given that AISD has a clearly established policy and procedures for nominating, evaluating, and placing students in gifted education, the degree to which teachers and principals could articulate the various components for evaluating students for the gifted program would serve as a measure of their knowledge of the gifted evaluation process (the G/T Advocates' responses were excluded from this analysis given that the G/T Advocate's prime responsibility is to oversee this process, and therefore they must have a complete knowledge of the evaluation process). These components are:

1. Parent nomination
2. Adapted Academic Scales (academic measure)
3. Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scales (behavioral measure)
4. Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT; English)/Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT; Spanish) (cognitive/language ability measure)
5. Raven's Progressive Matrices (nonverbal ability measure)
6. Student portfolio.

Based on the descriptions of the evaluation process, the modal number of components listed by the teachers and principals was five components (six of the nine respondents, 66.7%). For the other three respondents, one respondent listed four components, and the other two listed all six components. These data indicate that the participating school personnel are very knowledgeable about the gifted evaluation process.

The second theme that emerged from the data was labeled Professional Development. This theme concerned teachers and principals recognizing that involvement with gifted education served to enhance their teaching abilities and allow them to develop broader teaching repertoires. All the respondents expressed how becoming involved in gifted education had challenged them professionally to take more risks, and to try new ideas. One teacher described the change in her teaching as follows:

> If I did not have to worry about them [gifted students], then I think perhaps my teaching would not be as effective or innovative — the best it could be.

Another teacher commented on her professional development through gifted education:

> I got into G/T because I wanted to improve on how I taught, basically different strategies. What can I do to get kids excited about learning, make them more interested instead of the same boring stuff? How can I make learning more fun? I'm always trying to keep up today. I'm always looking through magazines, trying to see what classes I can take, workshops, whatever can help me shed a different light on how I do something, because I don't want to get stuck in a rut. If this is the only way I can do something, that's boring.

In addition to the teachers seeking to enhance their teaching, both principals also commented how gifted education served to improve their professional development. Although neither principal is in a classroom teaching, both noted that when they were teaching, they found gifted education personally and professionally challenging, and wanted to obtain the gifted credential to meet that challenge.

The third theme that emerged from respondents' interviews, Gifted Characteristics, had the most coded responses of any of the 13 themes. This theme involved respondents' knowledge of the characteristics of gifted students. During their interview, all the respondents related stories about students they had encountered in their careers who either were classified as gifted or had been nominated for the gifted program. Often these stories were told to illustrate how a particular characteristic was a hallmark of

giftedness. As such, superior academic abilities (e.g., reading; writing; mathematical ability; scientific understanding) appeared in all of the interview responses.

In addition to superior academic abilities, a number of other characteristics also emerged from the respondents' responses. The characteristics stated by respondents most often (out of the 11 respondents) include: (a) curiosity (n = 11), (b) creativity (n = 11), (c) the ability to grasp concepts quickly (n = 10), and (d) going beyond expectations (n = 10).

Regarding the gifted characteristic of curiosity, every respondent commented that the gifted students whom they had taught asked many questions, but that the type of questions these students would ask went beyond simple clarification. For example, one teacher noted that in a lesson on the solar system, her gifted students would ask if other stars had planets or if there were other galaxies.

Every respondent also made mention that their gifted students showed great creativity. This creativity, according to the respondents would often manifest itself in novel work products by the students, insightful or divergent perspectives on class topics, innovative problem-solving strategies, or humor. One teacher related a story of one bilingual child who would make up wordplays and puns with English and Spanish words.

With respect to the characteristic that gifted students grasp concepts quickly, 10 of the 11 respondents cited this behavior as a gifted characteristic. Most of the examples respondents gave for this aspect of giftedness typically related to mathematics and science. For example, several teachers commented that some of their gifted students were able to demonstrate an understanding of subtraction before they presented it as a mathematical procedure. One teacher noted: "When I asked how he figured out how to

subtract, he said he 'unadded' it." Other examples respondents provided also included concepts such as reading comprehension strategies, and biological or scientific processes (e.g., plant growth; the water cycle).

Finally, nearly every respondent cited gifted children's processes and products going beyond their expectations as a gifted characteristic. This characteristic manifested itself in a number of ways. Respondents often cited that their gifted students would pay greater attention to the presentation of their work, engaging in more editing and rewriting, presenting more details than required to complete assignments that demonstrated a deeper understanding of the concept, and extending activities to include further ideas and implications of their work. This notion of gifted students going beyond what is expected also appeared in the GSC observations, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

In addition to the aforementioned characteristics that respondents offered as hallmarks of giftedness, many of the respondents also commented about ELs' linguistic and cultural differences. These responses constituted the fourth theme, Language and Culture, of the Professional Knowledge principle. Responses coded with this category appeared to center around two related, but distinct aspects. The first aspect involved the idea that gifted EL children's linguistic and cultural differences bring a broader perspective to the gifted program. Respondents described students' bilingual and bicultural backgrounds as bringing a richness and diversity to the program. One teacher captured this idea very succinctly: "Because they have different experiences than the regular students, they bring their perspective. They bring their culture, a rich culture, [and] their beliefs." Another teacher commented:

> They [gifted ELs] bring cultural differences, which I think is good for everyone. I think the fact they know, hopefully, they know two languages, or at least are working on it, because it adds a richness to it.

From these comments, the respondents clearly recognize the value such cultural and linguistic diversity that gifted ELs offer by being included in the gifted programs.

The second, related aspect that emerged from this Language and Culture theme involved the benefits that bilingualism and biculturalism brought to the gifted students themselves. Many of the teachers commented how fluently some gifted children could switch back and forth between Spanish and English, or how these students were able to see more than one perspective or express themselves in more than one way because of their bilingual or bicultural backgrounds. One teacher noted: "You don't really know your own language until you try to learn a new one. They can see things a little bit differently than others, [which is] a richness." Another teacher commented that some gifted EL students appeared to have a strong aptitude for language learning. She noted that the students she nominated for the gifted program appeared to reach a high proficiency in English very rapidly, but retained their Spanish. This facility with language, she suggested, allowed them to develop very divergent, inventive ways of problem solving. Describing one student's abilities, this teacher asserted:

> One of the kids, since she was in first grade, she was totally dominant in both languages. The child's thinking processes were totally outside of the box. She always had different ideas, or saw things for different animals. She was really, really good in both languages.

These four themes, Knowledge of Process, Professional Development, Gifted Characteristics, and Language and Culture, provide substantial evidence that professional knowledge about giftedness is paramount in enhancing the prospects for ELs to be identified and placed in gifted programs. From the responses from the bilingual education teachers, principals, and G/T Advocates, it is clear that school personnel at Palm and Wooldridge are highly trained and well versed in the issues, challenges, and strengths that EL children bring to gifted programs. This wealth of professional knowledge, coupled with a strong belief in the value of diverse students participating in their gifted programs, and a deep commitment to create an inclusive (rather than exclusive) gifted program in their schools speaks volumes about the ethos of these two schools that have resulted in relatively highly successful rates of gifted ELs participating in Palm and Wooldridge's gifted programs.

In addition to the Structural, Assessment, and Sociocultural factors discussed in Chapter 3, I briefly discussed the aspects that illustrate the interactions between the three factors in my conceptual model: School-Community Relations, Parent Nominations, and Teacher Participation (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). In the following sections, I discuss these aspects more fully.

School-community relations. The first aspect, School-Community Relations, involves the interactions between the Structural and Sociocultural factors in my conceptual model (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). These interactions are manifested by the degree to which a school is responsive to the needs of the communities it serves. This responsiveness, in turn, affects how successful the school will be in operating its

programs, including the gifted program. Based upon my content analysis of the interview data, three themes emerged that address the School-Community Relations aspect, "Parent Advocacy," "Parent Knowledge," and "Parent Involvement." Unfortunately, the data collected to investigate this aspect come from only one direction: school personnel's perceptions and beliefs about their relationships with parents and community members. To be sure, parents' and community members' perceptions and beliefs about the school's responsiveness to their needs are equally important and worthy of study. However, as noted in Chapter 4, research on the Sociocultural factor was beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, information on this aspect from the point of view of school personnel can provide some insights into the interaction between the Structural and Sociocultural factors.

1) *Parent advocacy*. The idea underlying the Parent Advocacy theme involved school personnel's concern for parents' welfare. This concern that teachers and principals discussed took the form of ensuring that parents, *all Spanish speakers*, felt welcomed, respected, and comfortable speaking Spanish at the school. Every teacher stated that she made special efforts to help parents feel welcome and comfortable by contacting parents at regular intervals throughout the year, weekly progress notes, and parent-teacher conferences. For the teachers and principals, speaking Spanish was extremely important. One teacher described her efforts as follows:

> I think just by contacting them and inviting them to come in and talking to them, and always making them feel welcome. I think sometimes the parents of children who are not proficient in English, the parents are not proficient in English either,

> and just to make them feel welcome, and let them know that there is someone here who can communicate with them, and talk to them and answer their questions. I think that's reassuring to them, because a lot of times it's opposite to that.

This contact and reassurance teachers provide had special importance regarding the gifted program. Teachers commented that often the bilingual parents had very little information or knowledge about what giftedness is, and the benefits the gifted program could provide for their children. One teacher described, very poignantly, how her own experiences as a parent with a child nominated for the gifted program encouraged her to work more closely with parents:

> As a parent, I never thought about it [the gifted program]. I knew my children were very smart, but I never heard of it, because when I was in school, there wasn't anything like that. So when they told me about my kids, I was really glad that they noticed that. It took these two special teachers to see that there was something different about them. So when I became a teacher, I wanted to do the same thing, because if it wasn't for these two teachers offering the opportunity to me — this program — I might not have known about it.

In addition to the teachers promoting an open, inviting environment for Spanish-speaking parents, the principals have engaged in a number of activities to welcome the parents of their EL students. One principal, who is not bilingual, commented that she was aware that the Spanish-speaking parents were concerned with her inability to speak Spanish when she became principal of her school. As such, she holds a monthly

"Principal's Coffee" to provide a forum for parents to voice their issues. When asked how she sought to address the language difference with Spanish-speaking parents, she noted:

> One of the issues and obstacles for me to overcome was the fact that I'm not bilingual. With a large population that is bilingual, parents were immediately concerned. In fact, I attended a coffee in April before I started and met some parents, and that was one of the things that they talked about. I said to them, "You're going to have to give me chance to prove to you that I am here for your child; I don't care what the language issue is. If you have a concern and you need to talk to me, you come in and let me know in your language, and I'll find someone to help translate." *Language is never to be a barrier, never to be a barrier.* Everything we do is in two languages. We just had a PTA meeting last night. It may often last longer because we do everything in two languages. The coffee talks are in two languages. The parents are feeling very comfortable with asking me questions, and they ask in Spanish. Somebody is always there to translate. The visibility thing is very important.

In addition to the principal striving to make herself as available as possible to Spanish-speaking parents, during my visits to her school, I observed office staff speaking Spanish with children and parents. I also observed the principal, with little inconvenience or embarrassment, readily asking teachers or office staff to translate with parents. Despite her inability to speak Spanish, the principal's actions very likely convey the powerful message to parents that their language is respected and welcomed.

The principal of the other school has the benefit of being bilingual and Latina, thus the language issue is not a concern for her with parents. During my visits to her school, I observed her in the hallways talking with children, greeting parents and their children at the front doors, answering telephone calls, and meeting with parents in conferences speaking completely in Spanish. This willingness to engage parents and children in their language also very likely sends a powerful message, as at the other school, that Spanish is valued as a language and that Spanish speakers are welcome in her school. Regarding the gifted program, however, she noted that parents often were hesitant to nominate their children. To address this issue, she commented:

> We have worked really hard to let the parents know, especially the Spanish-speaking parents, what the program is, why it's important, and why they should nominate their child if they see these kinds of characteristics. I think it's just an education not just for the kids, but also for the parents. And little by little we've had more children nominated by their parents. The other point of that is the teachers, if they see someone that they feel would qualify for the gifted program, we let them contact the parent.

Based upon interview data as well as observations of the actions and policies of teachers and principals at both schools, school personnel at both Palm and Wooldridge strive to provide an open and respectful environment for EL children and their parents.

2) *Parental knowledge*. The idea underlying the Parental Knowledge theme involved school personnel's perceptions regarding parent knowledge about the gifted program. Every teacher related stories of their experiences informing the parents of

students who they wished to nominate their child for the gifted program. Teachers reported three types of reactions by parents upon notification: agreement, surprise, or hesitancy. Regarding parents' reactions of agreement, teachers reported that these parents often already recognized their children's abilities, but did not know about the gifted program. Parents' surprised reactions, teachers reported, typically involved parents not realizing that their children's performances were beyond what was typical for their age. Finally, teachers reported that parents who responded hesitantly conveyed they did not want to put undue pressure on their children.

Regardless of the parents' reactions, respondents perceived that the parents of their EL students, in general, were not very well informed about the gifted program. One respondent commented that parents seemed to find it difficult to distinguish between a gifted child and a bright child. When asked about parents' ability to make this distinction, she responded:

> Many times I don't think they [parents] do, because it's that fine line between "my kid's really sharp," and "what my kid's doing is awesome," or "I'm bragging." And parents don't know what would be a good piece of evidence to show that their child is on the ball.

Another respondent also noted:

> Parents are not very informed, I would say. I wouldn't say they don't care, but they're not informed. Maybe we need to do a better job at talking to parents about what things to look for, and how to go about the process, and everything,

and nominate their kids. I don't think our parents are very informed. Maybe we could do a better job.

In sum, the Parental Knowledge theme provides evidence that there are still challenges for school personnel at Palm and Wooldridge in terms of parent education. Although teachers and principals at both schools expressed the sense that parents were not very well informed about the gifted program, they also expressed a desire to do more to meet this challenge. This notion of educating parents more about the gifted program figured very prominently in a number of the interviews, and it relates to the next theme that emerged from the interview data.

3) *Parental involvement*. Underlying the Parental Involvement theme pertains to school personnel's perceptions about the degree to which parents participate in the gifted evaluation process. An important way in which parents can be more involved is through education. As such, the principals commented that they have continued to search for new ways to educate parents about the gifted program. One principal remarked:

> We provide parents with information about parent trainings and sessions that they can attend. We provide them a timeline. We're available to ask questions. One of our issues is parent education and training and understanding all the processes that are going on, and the G/T process is one. We're all learning that one.

Teachers also described their efforts to educate the parents about the gifted program and the benefits that the program could offer their children. Teachers reported providing parents with a wide range of information, such as: (a) conceptions of giftedness, (b) behavioral characteristics of gifted children, (c) gifted curriculum and

instruction, (d) nomination and evaluation procedures, and (e) potential benefits of participating in the gifted program. Moreover, teachers commented that they would employ a variety of the methods to provide information about the gifted program, such as holding an open house at the beginning of each semester to present information on the gifted program, scheduling parent-teacher conferences, sending home information packets with the child, or calling parents directly to discuss nominating the student for the gifted program. One teacher described her efforts as follows:

> When I talk to the parents, especially with those papers [nomination forms] that are given, because they don't understand, even though it's in Spanish, they don't know what's this for, and I explain it to them. They should fill it out [regarding] everything they know, anything special, because their child can far exceed where they are right now. That's where I guide them. So the parents, they do listen, they do listen, out of excitement, and great attention.

In sum, the Parent Advocacy, Parental Knowledge, and Parental Involvement themes provide evidence for the School-Community Relations aspect. From these data, it is clear that the relationships that the teachers and principals at Palm and Wooldridge cultivate with parents play an important role in the gifted evaluation process, and as such, are integral to these schools' success in identifying gifted EL Latinos.

Teacher participation. The second aspect, Teacher Participation, involves the interactions between the Structural and Assessment factors of my conceptual model (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). One theme, labeled "Nondiscriminatory Assessment," emerged that captures school personnel's perceptions of the fairness of the evaluation process. For this

theme, responses from the G/T Advocates were particularly salient, given their position overseeing the gifted program. Based on interview data, respondents conveyed a general sense of fairness in the evaluation process with respect to ELs. One G/T Advocate commented:

> With our bilingual children, we hold them to the same standard that we hold everybody else. I really feel very confident that when children are brought into this program, it's because they're supposed to be in the program. It's my job, if someone comes to second-guess me, as a person in charge of this program, and the committee agrees, if our signatures are on there, we want to be able to back it up — and data, it clearly states this.

With respect to EL students' language differences affecting placement decisions, the G/T Advocate continued:

> It [nominees' language status] does not — *not at all*. We have a strong bilingual community at [school], and strong bilingual teachers that are all about making sure, as I am, as [the principal] is, that all of our children's needs are being met, whether it's special ed., special needs, bilingual, English speaking. It just doesn't matter here. It shouldn't be held against you; it shouldn't be to your advantage. It's just a fact. It's who these children are — it's their families, it's their circumstances, their homes. Up here it's all the same to us. We don't weight it more this way or the other. We try our best to put everybody on the same level playing field, with everything possible.

Another feature of the evaluation process that proved to be very important was the inclusion of bilingual education teachers on the Gifted Selection Committee (GSC). Given that EL students' portfolios were often in Spanish, the bilingual education teachers helped translate materials. The G/T Advocate at one of the schools commented:

> On the selection committee, we have a bilingual teacher sitting on the committee, because there's no way I feel that just English speakers could assess a portfolio in Spanish. So we rely heavily on our bilingual teachers on the selection committee. And that's happened over the last few years. Over the last few years, we've been getting more and more bilingual teachers that are qualified to teach G/T.

As noted by the G/T Advocate, the bilingual education teachers that serve on the GSC provide not only help with translations of Spanish language materials in nominees' portfolios, but they also provide expertise on bilingualism and second language acquisition with respect to nominees' academic development. This expertise appears essential for the GSC to evaluate EL student profiles in the most equitable and nondiscriminatory manner.

In sum, teacher participation in the gifted nomination and evaluation process holds particular benefits for the nondiscriminatory assessment of gifted ELs. Although the bilingual education teachers contribute to the assessment process via their observations and ratings on academic and behavioral scales, they also can contribute to the assessment process by serving on the GSC as an advocate and expert for EL students. I next turn to the observations of the GSC and the evaluation processes at Palm and Wooldridge.

Observational Analysis

Assessment factor. The second factor in my conceptual model is the Assessment factor (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). As stated in Chapter 3, this factor encompasses the process by which children are evaluated for eligibility for the gifted program. The Assessment factor consists of four principles that reflect the general principles of nondiscriminatory assessment: "Use of Multiple Sources of Data," "Collection of Objective and Subjective Data," "Early Identification of Students," and "Delay Decisionmaking." Based upon AISD policy, the first two principles of the Assessment factor, Use of Multiple Sources of Data, and Collection of Objective and Subjective Data, are required elements of the evaluation process. Regarding Multiple Data Sources, AISD requires assessment data from the following sources for every nominated student (see Table 4.5, p. 77, for the complete assessment battery for grades K-5 and 6-12; see Appendix G for brief descriptions of these instruments for grades K-5):

1. Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)/Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT)
2. Raven's Progressive Matrices
3. Adapted Academic Scales (AAS)
4. Traits, Aptitudes, Behaviors Scale (TABS)
5. Parent Nomination Form
6. Student Portfolio.

Regarding the second principle, Use of Objective and Subjective Data, the assessment battery used to evaluate students for the gifted program includes both types of instruments. Objective instruments utilized in the assessment battery are the CogAT, the BVAT, and the Raven, while subjective instruments include the AAS, the TABS, the parent nomination form, and the student portfolio. Regarding the last two principles,

Early Identification and Delay Decisionmaking, evidence of these principles can be found in the deliberations of the GSC meeting. I observed the GSC meetings at both Palm and Wooldridge to examine these deliberations.

At Palm, the GSC consisted of the Cathy, the G/T Advocate, Nancy, the principal, and Lois, the guidance counselor.[6] A fourth member, Doris, a bilingual education teacher, could not attend this meeting, but would consult with Cathy later to review the nomination folders as well. At Wooldridge, the GSC consisted of Denise, the G/T Advocate, and bilingual education teachers James and Brenda. At both schools, the G/T Advocate began the meeting by describing the Student Identification Profile sheet (see Appendix B for a blank form). In both schools there was a new member on the GSC, thus it was necessary to explain the GSC's processes to them. This was a fortuitous turn of events, as these explanations also served to help me with my observations. Both G/T Advocates also explained that previous committee members had developed a procedure for reviewing student evaluation data at each respective GSC meeting that had been useful in the past. Thus, the G/T Advocates felt that it would beneficial to continue with this procedure, reviewing data in the following order:

Palm	Wooldridge
CogAT/BVAT	AAS
Raven	Parent nomination form
AAS	TABS
TABS	Raven
Parent nomination form	CogAT/BVAT
Portfolio	Portfolio

The G/T Advocates informed the committee of the breakdown of nominations by grade level. Through my observations, I also noted the race/ethnicity of nominees. These data

are presented in Table 5.13. At Palm, 18 students were nominated in 2003-2004. Of these 18 students, 4 students were White, 5 were African American, and 9 were Latino.

Table 5.13
Gifted Nominations by Grade Level and Race/Ethnicity for Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools: 2003-2004

	Palm				Wooldridge			
Grade	White	African American	Non-EL Latino	EL Latino	White	African American	Non-EL Latino	EL Latino
K	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
1	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	2
2	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	2
3	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	3
4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
5	0	1	0	0	2	2	1	0
Total	4	5	4	5	3	2	4	9

Disaggregating the Latino nominations into non-EL and EL components, 4 students were non-EL students, and 5 were EL students. At Wooldridge, 18 students were also nominated in 2003-2004. Of these 18 students, 3 students were White, 2 were African American, and 13 were Latino. Disaggregating the Latino nominations, 4 students were non-EL students, and 9 were EL students.

Based on observational data, there were a number of issues that were consistent across the GSC observations at both Palm and Wooldridge. These issues include: (a) the relevance of the BVAT to the decisionmaking process; (b) the importance of the Raven in the decisionmaking process; (c) the utilization of a "compare-contrast" method to evaluate student profiles; (d) differences between the evaluation of younger students and older students; (e) borderline and idiosyncratic cases. I present observational data from both schools for each of these issues. I begin with the relevance of the BVAT as an assessment tool.

1) *Relevance of the BVAT*. At the beginning of each meeting, the GSC at each school began their review of nomination folders from the early grades (i.e., grades K-1). At both schools, the first folders to be reviewed were from EL students. These folders prompted discussion of the BVAT as an assessment tool for the gifted program.

At Palm, Nancy noted that she felt the BVAT did not really help in making selection decisions, as it seemed to have very little to do with demonstrating the EL students' abilities. She related a story that the first year she was principal at her school, she had to administer the BVAT herself for the EL students nominated for the gifted program, as the district did not provide any personnel to administer it at that time. She felt she did not have a lot of training in administering the BVAT, and thought it too hard for many of the children. She complained it had a lot of archaic words and words used very infrequently by children. Cathy concurred with Nancy, commenting that the most the BVAT told them was the children's level of English proficiency, which they already had some sense from the portfolio and the teacher's comments.

At Wooldridge, all three members wondered why the BVAT was included in the evaluation. Denise commented that although she knew it was a Spanish-language measure, she wondered what information it was really giving them. Brenda knew more about the BVAT, commenting that it gave students' relative ability in English and using English and Spanish, but it really didn't say much about their academic abilities. Brenda appeared not to like the BVAT as a measure, saying it had a lot of old words, and vocabulary that a lot of her children would not know. She then related a story how she had nominated one child who she felt was an exceptional student. When the child came

back from taking the BVAT, the student looked as if she was going to cry. Brenda remarked: "She came up to me and said, 'Teacher, I didn't know any of the words, they were so hard!'" James agreed, relating another story of one fourth-grade student he had nominated having a similar experience, telling the group that the boy told him that it (the BVAT) made no sense; he didn't know what they asked of him. Denise also mentioned that she had called the AISD Office of Advanced Academic Services to ask for more information about how to use the BVAT in evaluation decisions, but that they had not been very helpful.

In sum, GSC members at both schools questioned the usefulness of the BVAT as an assessment tool. To committee members, the BVAT did not appear to provide much information about EL students' intellectual or academic abilities beyond their relative bilingual functioning and English proficiency. As such, a general consensus appeared to be reached that BVAT scores for the EL nominees would not weigh very heavily in making selection decisions.

2) *Importance of the Raven*. In contrast to the BVAT, GSC members at both schools appeared to rely more heavily on the Raven's Progressive Matrices as an indicator of student's intellectual abilities. Moreover, there was also a general consensus that this measure was useful in identifying gifted students in math, particularly with EL students. When a student performed very high on the Raven, the GSC would then examine the teacher's ratings on the Math Adapted Academic Scale and the portfolio to see if these two measures confirmed or disconfirmed their hypothesis based on the Raven score.

At Palm, this discussion concerning the use of the Raven to predict potential giftedness in math was prompted when Lois noted that one first grader scored very high on the Raven. Nancy noted that sometimes a high Raven score might indicate high ability in math, so she suggested they look at the AAS to see if the teacher felt the student was strong in math. Overall, the teacher rated this student very high on the AAS, showing strengths in all content areas, including math. These ratings were also corroborated with the TABS, particularly in the areas of inquisitiveness, memory, problem solving, and humor. The committee unanimously agreed to place the student in the gifted program for Math.

At Wooldridge, a similar discussion concerning the Raven took place upon review of a kindergarten EL student's performance on the Raven. All three members seemed very surprised, as the student scored at the 98th percentile for his age. Here, Brenda, the newest member of the GSC, asked what the 98th percentile meant. She said she thought that it meant that the student got 98% of the items correct. Denise corrected her, explaining that the Raven provides scores in the form of percentile ranks, thus a 98th percentile meant that this student's score was higher than 98% of all the children his same age who took the test to standardize it. This appeared to help Brenda a lot, as she then commented, "Oh, that *is* high!" James added that given the high score on the Raven, this student might be eligible for the gifted program in Math. Upon review of the student portfolio, Brenda commented that for the math exercises, the child had very inventive and creative drawings to illustrate how he solved the problem. James also noted that the student seemed to present more information as to his mathematical reasoning processes,

above and beyond what other children demonstrated. In the end, the committee unanimously agreed the child qualified for the gifted program in Math.

In sum, both committees appeared to find the Raven a much more useful assessment tool to make selection decisions, especially in conjunction with the behavioral measures and student portfolios. This finding is encouraging, given that research has demonstrated the utility of the Raven in identifying gifted EL students (Mills & Tissot, 1995).

3) *Use of the compare-contrast method*. A third issue that emerged from the GSC at both schools concerned the use of the compare-contrast method to evaluate profiles from students nominated by the same teacher. Although each student was considered for selection individually, their evaluation data was also examined in relation to another nominee's evaluation data with similar characteristics as a "benchmark." This compare-contrast approach raised two questions that provided a wealth of information about the GSC's decisionmaking processes: (a) mismatches within a given student's profile, and (b) when to delay decisionmaking.

The GSC at Palm reviewed one EL first grader, noting that, except for the low Raven score (37th percentile), the other scores (e.g., AAS; TABS; parent rating) were very similar to another EL first-grade student's profile. Looking at the portfolio, however, this child did not appear to have as strong a portfolio as the first child. This circumstance brought up the first issue, mismatches between the different assessment data sources. Cathy noted that the portfolio did not really seem to support the high AAS

and TABS scores, so she wondered what it was about this student that the teacher felt warranted the nomination.

Lois, the newest member of the GSC, asked what the committee did when there was a mismatch between data sources. Nancy responded first, saying that typically they liked to "err on the side of the child" — if there seemed to be some evidence that the student could benefit from gifted instruction, they would place her/him in the gifted program. Cathy also commented that usually the mismatch was one of low scores, but a strong portfolio, the opposite of this particular child's profile. She also said that when the portfolio was strong, they would look to the AAS and TABS to help support justifying the placement. For the EL students, Cathy noted, the cognitive measures sometimes did not have as much emphasis, as the BVAT was useless, and the Raven score did not always add support. For English-speaking students, Cathy commented that the portfolio was also important in justifying selection. She related a story how the previous year, they had a third grader who was an exceptional student, but did very poorly on the CogAT and Raven. Nancy remembered the student, saying that this student tended to get very nervous with standardized tests, remarking that she went to the nurse with a stomachache after the TAKS last year. In that case, the student's portfolio and academic scale scores were very high, offsetting the low scores on the cognitive measures.

At Wooldridge a very similar compare-contrast approach was utilized, also leading to a discussion on mismatches between data sources. They noted where one student appeared to outperform another in particular areas, but they also looked at each profile individually to see if each child would qualify for the gifted program, regardless

of relative performance. Comparisons, it appeared, were used more to gauge which content areas the child would be best suited to qualify for the gifted program. Denise noted that there was often a mismatch, especially with the EL students, between the standardized scores and the portfolio and the academic and behavioral rating scales.

Brenda asked what was typically done when this mismatch appeared. Denise and James both replied that the portfolio often served to justify the decision to place the child in the gifted program, as Denise put it "giving the child the benefit of the doubt." Many times during the meeting, the GSC would review a student profile with lower BVAT scores, but higher Raven scores, or low scores on both the Raven and BVAT, but outstanding portfolios and teacher ratings. Denise also noted that the teacher rating scales and the parent nomination also were reexamined to see if these data, along with the portfolio, supported placement in particular areas (e.g., Language Arts; Math).

This discussion about mismatches led the GSC to discuss the issue of placing a child in the gifted program that might be a high achiever, but not necessarily gifted. Brenda noted that it might be unfair or potentially harmful to place a child in the program if the work might be too demanding and frustrating, but she also felt that she would not want to deny the child the chance to "rise to the challenge" and perhaps be very successful. Denise agreed, adding that she felt that the gifted program might serve to keep a child motivated to excel in school. James also noted that many of his fourth grade gifted bilingual students seemed to be especially proud of their gifted label, and were competitive with themselves and the other English-speaking students.

The second question raised by the GSC at both Palm and Wooldridge concerning the use of the compare-contrast approach was the delaying of selection decisions until further evidence was collected. This aspect of the decisionmaking process provides evidence for the fourth principle of the Assessment factor of my conceptual model, "Delay Decisionmaking" (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). In a small number of cases, the GSC felt that the student nomination folder did not have enough information for them to make a selection decision, but rather than reject the nomination, committee members agreed to wait and ask the nominating teacher to gather more portfolio materials, or ask the teacher to come into the GSC meeting and discuss the nominee with the committee.

In the case of the first-grade EL student at Palm mentioned previously (p. 168), Nancy noted that the nominating teacher was Doris, a member of the GSC (although she could not be at the meeting that day). She commented that Doris has quite a bit of expertise in giftedness, and felt that Doris could speak to the committee about this student before they made a decision. They all agreed that they would hold off on the decision until they had a chance to hear from Doris, and get her input on this student's nomination.

At Wooldridge, the GSC noted that one EL kindergarten student had very similar scores on the AAS, parent nomination, BVAT and TABS to another EL kindergartener (discussed on pp. 168-169), but the student's score on the Raven was somewhat lower. Furthermore, the committee noticed the portfolio was much thinner, suggesting this student might not be eligible this year. Denise noted, however, that the nomination was originally made early in the fall, and the teacher did not have much work to place in the portfolio. James suggested that they evaluate the second student's work with respect to

the first student, as a rough benchmark, to get a sense of the child's performance. Here, they placed more emphasis on developmental quality, creativity, and reasoning. James stated he felt this was a tougher case, as there was not a lot of evidence to support placement, but felt the student showed potential. He suggested they hold off on deciding, and ask the teacher for more portfolio materials to better assess the student's abilities.

4) *Differences in the evaluation of younger and older students*. The fourth issue that appeared to be consistent in the GSC's deliberations at both schools involved differences in evaluating student profiles, especially student portfolios, of younger students to those of older students. For the earlier grades, the committee members appeared to put more emphasis on developmental quality of the materials, asserting that the curricular demands of the earlier grades did not always provide evidence for outstanding examples of high academic ability.

At Palm, Cathy and Lois noted the developmental quality of student work in the portfolios, commenting on the creativity and effort nominees put into the assignments. For Math materials, Nancy noted how nominated students often drew pictures to illustrate their reasoning processes. Regarding Language Arts materials, nominated students' writing samples often were neat and very expressive. Lois commented that the story one first-grade nominee wrote had many of the elements of story grammar (e.g., introduction; characterization; an exciting incident; emotional responses), which appeared to be quite advanced for his/her age. Cathy was also impressed that this child had done two drafts of the story, apparently on his/her own, as noted by the teacher in the description of the portfolio item.

At Wooldridge, the student portfolios also appeared to create the greatest amount of discussion. For the early grades, committee members appeared to focus less on outstanding academic ability in the student portfolios, and more on developmental quality, creativity, reasoning, and motivation. Developmental quality seemed very prominent. Brenda and Denise noted the high level of penmanship, organization, and creativity in students' work. For the EL students, many of the language arts portfolio materials were copying exercises, but Brenda noted that they were neat and well formed for the age.

In contrast to the younger students, older students' portfolios (i.e., grades 2-5) were examined with a greater emphasis on academic content in terms of greater complexity and deeper understanding of content. At both schools, GSC members commented that the student profiles for the older students were remarkably uniform across the various evaluation materials, with consistently high scores on all measures.

Regarding the student portfolios and academic rating scales, another question appeared across the two GSC meetings involving the early identification of students, the third principle listed in the Assessment factor in my conceptual model (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). At Wooldridge, Brenda and James both noted that the academic scale ratings were not especially high for the younger students, but James prefaced his observation with the comment that these students were in early grades — there was not a lot of high-level academic content for them to look at. Brenda concurred, saying that the kindergarteners and first graders are hard to evaluate and nominate for the gifted program, as they are still developing many academic skills that might not show up until later grades. James also

added that some students in the early grades might develop one particular skill early, but not show the degree of ability that is typical of gifted students later on. For him, he said, the key word is "BEYOND" — the truly gifted students don't just score or perform above most of the others, they go *beyond* the expectations.

At Palm, the portfolio from a first-grade EL student also sparked a discussion about the difficulties in trying to identify gifted children in kindergarten and first grade. Cathy stated that she felt it was better to wait until second grade, when children had mastered more basic skills. Nancy agreed, saying sometimes some students develop a particular skill earlier than others, but by second or third grade, the other students catch up and they don't really stand out the way a gifted child would. Lois concurred, but also noted that some students stand out, even in the early grades. She said that the aforementioned portfolio they were evaluating seemed to contradict the notion that it is difficult to identify giftedness in the early grades, given that the child appeared to demonstrate a high degree of verbal skill, and keen mathematical reasoning.

At both Palm and Wooldridge, there was a concordance across both GSC observations of examining exemplary work of younger students with an emphasis on development quality. By contrast, portfolios from older students were examined with more weight placed on academic excellence. Given the deemphasis of academic excellence in younger students' portfolios, both schools' GSC appeared to contradict the Early Identification principle from my conceptual model, noting the difficulties in identifying outstanding kindergarten and first-grade students.

5) *Borderline and idiosyncratic cases*. Although both schools showed a high degree of similarity in their decisionmaking processes, there were come cases that were unique to each school that generated much discussion among GSC members, providing further depth as to the decisionmaking process. I first turn to the discussions of these individual cases at Palm.

The first case at Palm that generated much discussion involved a second grader who had been nominated the previous year. This student was a fraternal twin; both siblings were nominated, but only one sibling was selected. Cathy noted that this second grader's profile from the previous year had not been as strong as the twin's, and the committee had a difficult time deciding not to select him, given that he was a twin. She commented that the other sibling was somewhat of the "star" of the family, excelling in school, outgoing, and personable, while this student was more soft-spoken, shy, and quiet. This year, the profile was much stronger, meriting placement. Nancy speculated that this student's second grade teacher, who has the gifted credential, was much more challenging that his first grade teacher, and this may have contributed to him performing at a higher level. She also commented that this year, he seems to be "coming out of his [sibling's] shadow, and really finding his own way."

The second case that generated much discussion at Palm was an African American student nominee. Although this student's CogAT and Raven scores were not especially high, the AAS, parent nomination, TABS, and portfolio were very strong. Cathy noted, however, that this student also had a number of behavioral problems in school. Nancy and Lois also were very familiar with this student, and were aware of the

family situation. Nancy commented that the gifted program might provide a stabilizing environment for the student, allowing her/him to excel at school, and build self-esteem. The GSC agreed that this student deserved to be selected for the gifted program.

The GSC discussed how having a personal relationship with the children and knowledge of their home life affected their decisions to place or decline admission to the gifted program. Nancy felt that this "outside" information often served to help making the decision, because it added further depth to the profile. She reminded Cathy of a student from two years earlier who did not have the strongest profile, but was such a creative, unconventional, brilliant child that she was convinced he belonged in the gifted program. She described this student as a "true genius." She listed a number of behavioral examples of this "genius": talking to him was like talking to an adult, he caught on to things very quickly, he would take tasks and go beyond the assignment, and he would generalize ideas to larger concepts. Cathy agreed, remembering that student was often in the office, tending to get in trouble because he was bored in class. Cathy remarked that if she had not known him personally, she probably would not have thought to select him for the gifted program based solely on his profile.

At Wooldridge, there were also a small number of cases that generated much discussion. One issue the committee discussed involved the clustering of gifted students together. This discussion was prompted by the review of two second-grade EL students who were nominated by the same teacher and had very similar profiles. James and Brenda agreed that while both students showed above average abilities overall, one student appeared to be stronger in Language Arts, and the other appeared to be stronger

in Math. Brenda suggested that they select both students for the gifted program in each student's respective stronger area, and recommend that the students be reevaluated next year in the weaker area. Although they could not guarantee the students would be in the same class for third grade if they were not placed in the gifted program, placement would insure they would be clustered together, as there was only one third-grade bilingual education teacher with gifted credentials.

Denise was concerned, however, that placement based on a clustering assignment did not feel appropriate, stating that the students should qualify on their own merits. She felt one of the students was a borderline case, but she could not be sure, as the student was EL and most of her portfolio was in Spanish. Brenda appeared to advocate for the students, stating that she remembered them from her class in first grade, and that, if placed in the gifted program, they very likely would support each other, as they had done in her class. Brenda also stated that she did not have enough evidence to nominate them when she had them, but she remembered telling the second grade teacher to "keep an eye out" for these students. James asked Denise if she felt comfortable placing them on his and Brenda's recommendation, being more experienced with EL students, but for the teacher to monitor their progress to see if frustration set in. Denise expressed that this was acceptable, and all three agreed to go with Brenda's suggestion to place each student in the gifted program for the stronger area, with further recommendation to reevaluate for the weaker area next year.

The other two cases also involved two students that were nominated by the same teacher. They had similar profiles, with near perfect academic scale ratings, and high

parent nomination ratings. The BVAT scores, however, were both low, indicating limited English proficiency. One student also performed 1 stanine higher than the other on the Raven, and appeared to be slightly above the other student in Language Arts and Social Studies. Denise noted, however, that their portfolios were a bit thin. Thus, there was little portfolio evidence to support placement. Brenda also remarked that many of the writing samples for Language Arts and Social Studies were copying exercises. Therefore, there was not enough original writing present to determine if the students qualified for the gifted program. The GSC decided to ask the teacher to come into the meeting and discuss the reasons for nominating the students. They also asked the teacher to provide more original writing samples to help the committee determine if these students would qualify for the gifted program. These folders were set aside until the teacher spoke to the committee.

The teacher later joined the committee and spoke about the students discussed above. She mentioned that both students were aware that the GSC meeting was taking place, and were excited and a bit nervous about the decision. She also remarked that she had made the nominations earlier in the fall, and had completed the portfolios months before, so she had not supplemented the portfolios with newer, more original writing samples of the students' work. She also commented that both students were very hard workers, and often were leaders in the classroom, helping others, and competed (in a friendly way) with each other for the highest grades on assignments. The teacher agreed to collect more portfolio materials, and about 20 minutes later, both students showed up with a small stack of their own writing samples, and thanked the committee. The

supplemental materials and teacher recommendations proved useful, as they provided further evidence to support placement.

These students' selection brought up the issue of language support in the gifted program. Given that both students were in third grade, James wondered if they would be transitioned out of bilingual education into mainstream classes. Brenda left for a moment to see if these students had taken their TAKS test in English or Spanish, and returned with the information that they had passed the TAKS third-grade Reading test in English. This concerned James, as he commented that their BVAT scores still indicated limited English abilities. He seemed worried that the demands of gifted services in English only might be too high for the girls, who would probably be reclassified as "Language Other Than English," (LOTE), clarifying that this designation was for students who were proficient enough in English, but came from language-minority backgrounds. James commented that, due to these students' TAKS results, they would very likely not receive bilingual education or ESL support next year. He did not feel they were proficient enough in English to meet the demands of the gifted program in English only. The committee then began discussing if placement would be appropriate, not because the students were not qualified, but the placement might serve to frustrate and discourage them if the English demands were too difficult. Given that James is a fourth-grade ESL teacher and has gifted credentials, the GSC decided to place the students in the gifted program for Language Arts and Social Studies, with a recommendation to have them assigned to James' classroom next year.

In sum, there were a number of very similar processes the occurred in the GSC meetings at both Palm and Wooldridge. Both schools appeared to dismiss the BVAT as minimally useful in their deliberations for EL students, and rely more heavily on the Raven, TABS, AAS, and student portfolios to justify their selections in a more comprehensive and nondiscriminatory manner. Regarding student portfolios, the GSC at both schools employed a compare-contrast approach to aid in selecting the most appropriate content area(s) to place students in the gifted program. This approach occasionally results in mismatches among the various evaluation data sources in some student profiles, but both schools' GSC have an unofficial "benefit of the doubt" policy for students with borderline profiles. In addition, in the case of a student profile in which a selection decision is particularly difficult, the GSC delays making a decision, and requests more information to provide further evidence for placement. Finally, the GSC at Palm and Wooldridge evaluate nominations on a case-by-case basis, occasionally weighing "outside" evidence (e.g., home situation; language status) in determining the most appropriate placement for nominated students. Overall, the processes observed in these two schools' GSC meetings provide considerable support for the Assessment factor.

Parent nominations. The final aspect of my conceptual model is the interaction between the Assessment and Sociocultural factors (see Figure 5.3, p. 136). These interactions involve how information that parents provide to the GSC from the parent nomination form they submit affects the evaluation process. Given that data could not be collected from parents to fully examine this aspect, information for this interaction is

limited in scope (see Chapter 4, Footnote no. 1, p. 89, for a fuller explanation for this limitation).

In general, GSC members at both Palm and Wooldridge found that parents were inconsistent in the amount of information they provided about their children. GSC members noted that although parents of EL students often wrote very interesting and helpful comments describing their children's behaviors at home, the parent ratings for many of the nominated EL students were not especially high. There was some discussion at to why some Spanish-speaking parents did not rate their children very highly on the parent nomination form. It was suggested that this pattern of lower parent ratings might be explained due to cultural differences or lack of parental knowledge. That is, some Spanish-speaking parents were being humble and might not want to boast about their children, or that parents did not understand the importance of their input to the evaluation process or how to fill out the form as fully as possible. GSC members at both schools also noted that when parent nomination forms were filled out extensively, particularly from parents of EL children, the teachers had provided a great deal of support to the parents, which everyone agreed was invaluable. Regardless of the reasons for lower parent ratings, GSC members at both schools asserted that the parent nomination form always served to support selection of the student for the gifted program; low parent ratings do not weigh against a nominated student. There was a general consensus that parents need to be better informed about the nomination process, and have the opportunity to learn more about the gifted program. The GSC suggested that workshops might help give parents the necessary information to advocate for their children.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it would appear that AISD, overall, is underserving many of its gifted elementary students. There is considerable empirical evidence supporting the contention that gifted students are neglected at all three levels of analysis presented in this chapter. Quantitative analysis of demographic data from AISD revealed that a majority of elementary schools in AISD identify gifted students at rates below the district average, illustrating the primary level of neglect. Moreover, at the secondary level a moderately strong negative association between minority enrollment and gifted enrollment demonstrates that students attending high minority enrollment schools are less likely to be identified as gifted. Finally, EL Latino students in an overwhelming majority of schools in AISD are more underrepresented in gifted programs than non-EL Latinos, providing clear support for the tertiary level of neglect. Further support for this neglect at all levels in AISD can also be demonstrated via correlational analysis of minority enrollment and teachers possessing gifted education credentials who also have gifted students enrolled in their classrooms in AISD. The moderately strong negative correlation obtained clearly illustrate that gifted students enrolled in high enrollment minority schools are less likely to have teachers with the requisite gifted education credentials to provide gifted services.

Regarding the two schools that participated in this study, Palm and Wooldridge Elementary Schools, descriptive analysis of the evaluation results revealed that gifted EL Latino students appear to perform at high levels on the Raven, behavioral and academic

rating scales, and student portfolio measures. These results must be tempered, however, given the problematic nature of the psychometric properties of assessment tools used to identify these students. Moreover, disparity analysis of nomination rates at both schools revealed a disturbing pattern of overrepresentation in the nomination rates of EL Latinos at the expense of non-EL Latinos, an intensification of the secondary level of neglect in one school. This phenomenon of improvement of nomination rates at the tertiary level that results in the decline at the secondary level, however, may be a mathematical artifact. Nevertheless, these results still point to grave concerns regarding the representation of racial/ethnic minorities, including ELs, in gifted programs.

Despite the aforementioned challenges to increase the number of gifted EL Latino students, Palm and Wooldridge may offer some prospects for improving the educational lot of gifted EL Latino students. Regarding school personnel, respondents at both schools demonstrated a number of similar characteristics in their backgrounds that may also contribute to the success of these schools in identifying relatively high numbers of gifted EL Latinos. Based on the content analysis of interview data and observational analysis of GSC meetings, there is also support for my conceptual model to explain the success that these schools have achieved in identifying gifted EL Latino students at relatively higher rates than other elementary schools in AISD. Based upon respondents' interview data, there is considerable evidence supporting the Structural factor and School-Community Relations and Teacher Participation interactions. Personnel at both schools have developed an ethos in which there is a clear affirmation of the existence of gifted EL Latinos, an inclusive and welcoming environment for Spanish-speaking

parents, and an exhortation for teachers to continue to develop their expertise with gifted students. Moreover, based on observational data of GSC meetings, there is also extensive support for the Assessment Factor and Parent Nomination interaction. Although there are some questions concerning the psychometric integrity of some of the assessment instruments utilized in the evaluation process, both committees employ a multi-source, multimodal data collection procedure, and include professionals trained in *both* gifted education and bilingual education to promote equitable, nondiscriminatory assessment of all nominated students for the gifted program.

From these analyses, there are a number of recommendations in terms of research agendas and school policy that might serve to increase the representation of gifted EL Latino students at other schools with large EL Latino populations in AISD. I discuss these research implications and policy recommendations in the final chapter.

Notes

[1]As discussed in Chapter 4 (p. 69), Asian/Pacific Islander students were excluded from the combined minority enrollment for two reasons. First, Asian/Pacific Islanders constitute a very small percentage of the AISD elementary school enrollment and contribute very little to the combined minority enrollment percentage. Second, Asian/Pacific Islander students are typically *overrepresented* in gifted programs (see Table 2.6, p. 30, and Table 2.7, p. 32, for incidence data of Asian/Pacific Islander overrepresentation at the national and regional level). In the interest of objectivity, I calculated another correlation coefficient between percent gifted enrollment and percent minority enrollment including the Asian/Pacific Islander population. This obtained correlation was also –.68.

[2]Asian/Pacific Islanders were excluded from this analysis for the same reasons listed in Note 1, above.

[3]Given that 12 *t*-tests were performed using the same data set, the α was adjusted from .05 to .004 using Bonferroni's correction (.05/12) to avoid Type I error.

[4]Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indians at Palm and Wooldridge are not presented in this analysis for two reasons. First, these two populations are very small in relation to the other racial/ethnic groups (Palm: Asian/Pacific Islanders, 9 students; American Indians, 0 students; Wooldridge: Asian/Pacific Islanders, 21 students; American Indians, 2 students). Second, no students from these two groups were nominated for the gifted program in 2002-2003.

[5]When quoting respondent responses, I italicized particular words or phrases to show the respondent's original emphasis in the interview. The respondent conveyed this emphasis through vocal intonation. Furthermore, responses that are presented in this and subsequent sections are balanced between both schools.

[6]In the observational analysis, GSC members' names were changed to pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality, given the sensitive nature of some responses.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

As discussed in previous chapters, gifted education is a relatively neglected area of concern within the broader context of American education. Such neglect can be evidenced by the examination of the scholarly literature base on giftedness and gifted education, as well as budgetary allocations for gifted education at state and district levels. This primary level of neglect of the gifted in general, however, has more profound effects on the secondary level — the underrepresentation of gifted racial/ethnic minority students, whom Valencia and Suzuki (2001) described as the "neglected of the neglected," as this sector represents a subset of the gifted population in general. There has been extensive documentation of the underrepresentation of gifted racial/ethnic minority students (e.g., Chinn & Hughes, 1987; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Ford, 1998; Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002; Harris & Ford, 1991; Valencia & Suzuki). Moreover, the profound neglect at the secondary level is compounded even further at the tertiary level, gifted ELs, coined "the neglected of the neglected of the neglected" by Valencia and Villarreal (2001). There has been, however, little empirical evidence available to support this assertion that gifted ELs are indeed vastly underrepresented.

Based upon demographic data obtained from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) database, I conducted an analysis of the 74 elementary schools in the Austin Independent School District (AISD) to examine the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of neglect in terms of student

representation in gifted programs. At the primary level, the majority (62.2%) of AISD's elementary schools fell below the district average rate, a proportion significantly larger than expected. As such, the significant obtained χ^2 supports the assertion that gifted children, in general, are neglected. That is, although some elementary schools in AISD identify gifted students at relatively high rates, the majority of schools do not identify such students at comparable rates.

The degree of racial/ethnic segregation in AISD may point to one possible explanation for such disparate gifted incidence rates across the district's elementary schools. As such, I investigated the secondary level of neglect. At this level, the obtained correlational coefficient of -.68 indicated a moderately strong negative association between the percentage of gifted students and the percentage of combined Latino, African, and American Indian students in AISD's elementary schools. That is, as the percentage of racial/ethnic minority students enrolled increases, the percentage of gifted students tends to decrease. This result is consistent with the historical underrepresentation of minority students in gifted programs (Valencia & Suzuki, 2001).

Given that EL Latino students constitute a subpopulation of the racial/ethnic minority population, the secondary level of neglect certainly affects the tertiary level. To analyze the tertiary level of neglect, I disaggregated the Latino population into EL and non-EL components, and each subgroup's representation in gifted programs was compared. The obtained χ^2 revealed that the proportion of the 74 AISD elementary schools (n = 67; 90.5%) in which EL Latino students are more underrepresented in gifted programs than non-EL Latino students, differed significantly from the expected results.

In sum, in the overwhelming majority of schools in the district, the degree of underrepresentation of EL Latino students surpassed that of non-EL Latinos, providing strong empirical support for the tertiary level of neglect.

These results illustrate that the neglect of gifted students at all three levels — gifted students in general (primary), gifted racial/ethnic minority students (secondary), and gifted EL Latinos (tertiary) — can be demonstrated empirically by examining patterns of underrepresentation. In light of the meager attention to giftedness in the scholarly literature, and the historical underrepresentation of minorities, including ELs, in programs for the gifted, these results are not surprising. Moreover, at every successive level — from primary to tertiary — the degree of neglect examined appeared to increase, suggesting that such neglect is compounded at each level, lending further support for the concentric circle model of neglect proposed in this study (see Figure 2.1, p. 7).

In addition to the quantitative analysis I provided regarding underrepresentation patterns, further support for the neglect of gifted minority students and gifted ELs is evident from campus-level survey data in AISD regarding teachers who have gifted education teaching credentials. A moderately strong negative correlation of -.66 between minority enrollment and the percentage of teachers with gifted teaching credentials who have gifted students actually enrolled in their classrooms illustrates that gifted minority students attending high enrollment minority schools are less likely to have a teacher with the requisite credentials to provide services for them. Furthermore, based upon the survey data I compiled, AISD appears to have a surplus of teachers qualified to teach gifted students, but many teachers are underutilized, particularly in high minority

enrollment schools. Consequently, gifted students attending these schools are far less likely to be provided gifted services by qualified teachers, revealing additional evidence for the secondary and tertiary levels of neglect.

Despite the aforementioned evidence supporting the contention that gifted ELs experience the tertiary level of neglect, descriptive analysis of evaluation results provides a useful profile of the typical gifted EL student at Palm and Wooldridge. One very serious concern, however, regarding the appropriateness of the instruments utilized by AISD to assess students for the gifted program must be addressed.

With respect to EL students nominated for evaluation, only two instruments in the assessment battery are objective, standardized measures, the Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT) and the Raven's Progressive Matrices. According to reviewers and empirical research, the Raven is psychometrically adequate to assess giftedness with minority students. In addition, based on the descriptive analysis and Gifted Selection Committee (GSC) members' comments during their deliberations, the Raven also has some utility in identifying strengths in core content areas, particularly math. In contrast to the Raven, the BVAT is problematic for two reasons. First, given the questionable assumptions with respect to the standardization of the BVAT, it is unclear what the scores obtained from the BVAT actually tell evaluators about an individual student's language abilities. This concern also speaks to the second reason for the questionable use of the BVAT in gifted evaluations. From the observational data, there was a general consensus among GSC members at both Palm and Wooldridge that the BVAT did not provide much information to aid the committee in their selection decisions for EL students. Rather, some committee

members went so far as to assert that the BVAT was essentially useless as an assessment tool, adding little information to nominated students' profiles. Moreover, the three subjective measures, the Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scales (TABS), Adapted Academic Scales (AAS), and student portfolios, also present very serious problems regarding their utility as assessment tools — all three measures are nonstandardized, and have no empirical research to demonstrate their reliability or validity.

In addition to the problems with the psychometric adequacy of the assessment battery used to identify gifted students in AISD, Palm and Wooldridge continue to struggle with identifying students from all racial/ethnic groups at rates comparable to their proportions in the total school population, particularly non-EL Latinos. Although both Palm and Wooldridge are nominating EL Latino students for the gifted program at relatively high rates, Wooldridge appears to be nominating students from the various racial/ethnic groups at rates closer to their proportion of the total school enrollment. Non-EL Latinos at Palm, on the other hand, are being nominated at disparately lower rates than their percentage of the total school enrollment. This situation may be, however, a mathematical artifact. Given that the non-EL population at Palm is larger than the EL population, the higher nomination rate of EL Latinos than non-EL Latinos mathematically ensures that non-EL Latinos will be underrepresented at Palm.

Another possible explanation for the increase in non-EL Latino underrepresentation may be related to the aforementioned problems with the assessment battery, particularly the subjective measures. Given the lack of standardization and high degree of subjectivity on the TABS, AAS, and student portfolios, it is possible that teachers and GSC members

might be exhibiting some bias towards EL Latinos in their observations and evaluations using these instruments. As a result, non-EL Latinos might be unfairly penalized. One possible alternative to the use of nonstandardized measures to examine the behavioral characteristics of nominated students might be the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS; Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, & Hartman, 1976). Other possible alternative assessment batteries include the DISCOVER process described in Maker (1996), or the cognitive battery described in Scott, Deuel, Jean-François, and Urbano (1996; see Chapter 3, pp. 52-53, for brief descriptions of these studies providing empirical support for these assessment models).

Despite the rather bleak picture concerning the plight of gifted ELs, there has been research that has identified some innovative strategies to increase the representation of ELs in programs for the gifted. Specific "best practices" have been identified that could lead to increased representation of racial/ethnic minorities (both English-speaking and EL) in gifted programs (Frasier, 1987; Valencia & Villarreal, 2001; Valencia, Villarreal, & Salinas, 2002). From this body of research, I developed a conceptual model to investigate the specific practices that schools may employ to identify greater numbers of EL Latinos as gifted. In my conceptual model, I hypothesized that Structural, Assessment, and Sociocultural factors contribute to the successful identification and placement of EL Latinos in gifted programs. I also hypothesized that School-Community Relations, Teacher Participation, and Parent Nomination interactions between the three proposed factors further enhance the success of schools to identify gifted EL Latino students at relatively high rates. Utilizing a content analytic and observational approach,

I provided considerable empirical evidence supporting my conceptual model, and revealed a number of features that may serve to explain how Palm and Wooldridge are successful in identifying EL Latino students for the gifted program.

Regarding the Structural factor, the principals of both schools proved to be of great importance in promoting the success of the school in identifying gifted EL Latinos in a number of ways. First, both principals had very similar professional backgrounds, becoming involved in gifted education fairly early in their careers as teachers, thus providing a broad foundation in the issues and challenges of gifted education. Second, these principals demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the gifted programs of their schools for *all* their students, including ELs. They demonstrated this commitment through their own assertions, the policies they instituted at their schools, such as encouraging their staff to obtain the gifted credential, and including bilingual education teachers in the GSC. Third, both principals also illustrated a commitment to the parents of gifted EL students, striving to provide a welcoming and respectful environment for Spanish-speaking parents to participate in the gifted evaluation process. Bilingual education teachers also demonstrated a strong commitment to the gifted program in a number of ways. First, nearly every teacher possesses gifted credentials and is highly trained at working with gifted students. Second, some of these teachers also participated as members of the GSC, serving as advocates for and experts of gifted EL students in the evaluation process. Third, these teachers demonstrated a deep understanding of the evaluation process, participating via their nominations, student observations, and support to Spanish-speaking parents of nominated students.

With respect to the School-Community Relations, Teacher Participation, and Parent Nomination interactions, results from content and observational analyses provided considerable support for these interactions. This support is evidenced by the commitment demonstrated by principals and bilingual education teachers to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for Spanish-speaking parents. Moreover, the acknowledgement by the GSC of the need for increased participation and education of these parents in the gifted evaluation process further enhance these schools' ability to identify and place EL students in the gifted program.

Regarding the Assessment factor, G/T Advocates and the observations of the GSC at both schools provided a wealth of information concerning the evaluation process, particularly the use of nondiscriminatory assessment procedures in the GSC. As mandated by state and district policy, both schools utilized multiple measures to evaluate and select students for the gifted program. Both committees, however, appeared to place greater emphasis on behavioral measures and students' products to make decisions. This emphasis had a greater impact on EL students, given that the BVAT provides insufficient relevant information on EL students' abilities to aid the GSC in their decisionmaking. Furthermore, the inclusion of bilingual education teachers on the GSC added further depth and breadth to the GSC's decisionmaking processes, given that these teachers come to the GSC with expertise in bilingual education, second language acquisition, and giftedness in these populations.

Limitations

Generalization of these findings is limited, given the design of this study and the sample size. The original design of this study included investigation of two demographically "matching" schools with relatively lower identification rates of gifted EL Latino students to serve as comparisons for the two participating schools. The matching schools identified during the school selection process, however, declined to participate, warranting the design change to a case study approach.

Although the features and processes demonstrated at Palm and Wooldridge that appear to enhance the successful identification, evaluation, and placement of EL Latinos in gifted programs provided strong support for the conceptual model proposed in this dissertation, this case study was conducted in two schools in only one district in Texas. Moreover, disparity analysis of incidence rates of nominations reveal that even at the two participating schools, there are challenges to increasing the representation of EL Latinos in the gifted program. As such, these results cannot be generalized to other schools in AISD. That is, a claim that these features are *not* present in other schools in AISD that are less successful in identifying EL Latino students for the gifted program cannot be supported. It is unknown at this time what features and processes are operating in other schools in AISD that may inhibit the ability of school personnel at these schools to identify gifted EL Latino students at high rates.

Despite this methodological weakness, however, a literal replication, multiple-case study approach was validated, given the highly similar results that were obtained at

both case study sites, as predicted by the conceptual model I employed (Yin, 1984). Furthermore, these results converge with other research findings on gifted minority students that serve to increase their representation in gifted programs (Bernal, 1998; Riojas Clark & González, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1998; Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Valencia, Villarreal, & Salinas, 2002).

Implications for Research

Given the results of this dissertation study, there are a number of areas in which further research is warranted. These areas include: (a) the unit of analysis in the underrepresentation of gifted minorities and ELs; (b) external validation of my conceptual model; (c) the role of the principal in enhancing gifted programs; (d) heterogeneity in the non-EL Latino population; (e) the importance of parents in the gifted evaluation process; and (f) development of effective gifted assessment models.

The unit of analysis in the underrepresentation of gifted minorities and ELs. As a descriptive and exploratory study, this dissertation represents a first attempt to document the underrepresentation of gifted EL Latinos in schools. This finding alone should serve to spur continued research in a sorely needed area of education that concerns minority students. Given the explosive growth of Latino students in American schools, particularly in Texas and California (Valencia, 2002b), continued research on the

underrepresentation of gifted EL Latino students in school districts with large numbers of EL students is necessary to further document the tertiary level of neglect.

Although this study involved the use of disparity analysis to show the relative disproportionate representation of minorities and EL Latinos in gifted programs in AISD, there are alternative methods to examine this issue. Valencia and Suzuki (2001) examined Office for Civil Rights national survey data for 1994 of gifted incidence rates by race/ethnicity (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 1997; see Valencia & Suzuki, p. 230, for a fuller discussion). The authors noted that the White gifted incidence rate nationally was 7.20%, while the Hispanic and Black incidence rates were 2.95% and 2.97%, respectively. By calculating odds ratios for these two groups, Valencia and Suzuki reported that Hispanics and Blacks were 2.4 times less likely to be identified as gifted than Whites. The authors also noted that if the Hispanic and Black gifted incidence rates were *identical* to the White rate, there would be an increase of over 500,000 Hispanic and Black students identified as gifted. Valencia and Suzuki commented, however, that analyses using national level aggregated data often obscure variability at lower levels, thus the unit of analysis is very important in any analysis of the representation of minorities in gifted programs.

With respect to AISD, I conducted a similar analysis using the AISD district average incidence rate as the unit of analysis. In terms of equity, I found that if every school with a gifted incidence rate below the district average rate had the same incidence rate as the district average, then the number of gifted students would increase by over 500 students. Future research could refine this type of analysis by using more appropriate

units of analysis, such as the schoolwide gifted rate or incidence rates of individual racial/ethnic groups to examine the secondary and tertiary levels of neglect.

External validation of my conceptual model. Given the limitations of the case study design of this dissertation, future research in other schools would serve to establish stronger external validity (i.e., generalizability) evidence for my conceptual model. Based upon Yin's (1984) recommendations concerning replication logic in case study research design, further research might take two forms. One research design would involve the literal replication case study approach to provide more empirical support for my conceptual model. This research design would be appropriate for other schools in AISD such as Norman and Hart Elementary, or other predominantly minority schools such as Ridgetop Elementary (school no. 5, Table 4.2, pp. 72-73 of present dissertation) that, like Palm and Wooldridge, are relatively more successful in identifying gifted EL students than other schools. Another research design might include schools that are not predominantly minority schools, but have very high gifted incidence rates, such as Barton Hills Elementary (school no. 1, Table 5.1, p. 92). This approach would serve to provide further external validation by demonstrating that my conceptual model has explanatory power for schools that are successful in identifying gifted students, irrespective of race/ethnicity or EL status.

The second research approach discussed by Yin (1984) is the theoretical replication case study design, in which the case study produces contrary results for theoretically predicted reasons. This design would involve the investigation of schools in AISD, such as Pickle Elementary (school no. 74, Table 5.1, p. 92), that are less successful

in identifying and placing relatively high numbers of EL students in gifted programs. Future research that incorporates this theoretical replication design would also provide evidence of the features and processes that may inhibit, rather than enhance, the successful identification of gifted EL Latino students.

A third research approach involves the application of my conceptual model to different settings (e.g., other districts in Texas), different age groups (e.g., middle school students), or different populations (e.g., Asian /Pacific Islanders). Although this research approach is similar to a literal replication design, key elements of the case study (e.g., racial/ethnic group; age/grade level; research site) would be manipulated in a systematic and theoretically coherent manner to provide evidence for contrastive analysis between different types of school settings.

The role of the principal in enhancing gifted programs. Based upon data from my case study analysis, the training, commitment, and experience in giftedness and gifted education that the principal brings to the gifted program has a significant impact on the success of schools to identify gifted ELs. Given the support of this finding in the literature (Goertz et al., 1996; Ford et al., 1997), it is paramount that researchers investigate the importance of the role of the principal, particularly in terms of professional development of teachers and development of strong relationships with parents. Future research that explores these aspects will provide greater understanding of the role of the principal in successful gifted programs for EL students.

Heterogeneity in the non-EL Latino population. The descriptive analysis presented in Chapter 5 involved only EL Latino students nominated for the gifted program in the two participating schools. It is likely that the non-EL Latino population consisted of monolingual-English speakers *and* EL students who had exited a bilingual program before this study was conducted. Research that examined gifted identification practices and language differences has shown some promise, depending on the level of teacher training in giftedness, in promoting improved identification of gifted ELs (Fernández et al., 1998; Hunsaker, 1997). Thus, the inclusion of non-EL Latino students in the descriptive analysis of nomination data might shed further light on the typical characteristics of gifted Latino students. Such research, employing a cross-sectional analytic design, might also reveal developmental aspects of gifted Latino students' academic abilities in terms of second language acquisition and academic achievement.

The importance of parents in the gifted evaluation process. Although the investigation of the "Sociocultural" factor of the conceptual model presented in Chapter 3 of this study (see Figure 3.1, p. 45) was beyond the scope of this dissertation, there was some evidence that parent participation in the gifted evaluation process might be enhanced if schools work with parents, particularly Spanish-speaking parents, to provide (a) more information about gifted programs, and (b) to offer greater support from school personnel throughout the gifted evaluation process (Riojas Clark & González, 2001; Scott et al., 1992; Woods & Achey, 1991). Future research that examines the contributions of the parents of gifted EL students will enhance greatly our understanding on how best to improve the representation of ELs in gifted programs.

Development of effective gifted assessment models. Based on the observational analysis of the Gifted Selection Committee evaluations, some problems in the assessment process utilized by the two participating schools remain. One problem involved the assessment battery used in the assessment process, particularly the lack of psychometric integrity for a number of the informal measures used to evaluate nominees. Another problem involved the lack of helpful information provided by parent nominations. Future research that examines different assessment models will serve to promote best-case practices for EL students nominated for gifted programs. One possible approach is to develop an assessment process based on a theoretically grounded conception of giftedness, such as Sternberg's (1997) triarchic model, or Renzulli's (1986) three-ring conceptual model. As such, future research may provide empirical validation for assessment processes based on sound theoretical models of giftedness, and enhance best-case practices for the identification, evaluation, and placement of racial/ethnic minorities and ELs in gifted programs.

Implications for Practice

The identification and description of the factors that promote the inclusion of Latino EL students in gifted programs have important policy implications in regards to their representation in gifted programs. First, the professional preparation for school personnel, *particularly administrators and bilingual education teachers*, in gifted education is a necessary first step to improve the representation of EL Latino students in

gifted programs. Without adequate training in giftedness and gifted education, principals and teachers alike are less likely to recognize the unique abilities that gifted EL Latino students bring to the gifted program. Furthermore, this lack of expertise and experience on the part of school personnel with gifted students may serve as an impediment for personnel to advocate for improvement in the representation of ELs in gifted programs. Second, research has demonstrated that the education and inclusion of parents, particularly Spanish-speaking parents, in giftedness and gifted education is a vital part of improving the process by which EL Latinos are nominated, evaluated, and placed in programs for the gifted (Valencia & Suzuki, 2001; Riojas Clark & Gónzalez, 2001). Bilingual education teachers, properly trained in gifted education, can be on the vanguard of this improvement, providing information and support for Spanish-speaking parents to enhance the evaluation process for Latino EL students. Finally, the inclusion of bilingual education teachers in the selection process, as experts in bilingual education and second language acquisition, are in the unique position to aid schools in employing best-case, nondiscriminatory assessment practices in the evaluation of gifted EL Latinos.

Appendix A
Introductory Letter and Information Packet

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Department of Accountability
Office of Program Evaluation

TO: Principals Addressed

FROM: Karin Samii-Shore

DATE: May 1, 2003

SUBJECT: External Research Project #03.30: "The Neglected of the Neglected of the Neglected: A Case Study of Gifted English Learners in Two Austin Elementary Schools"

The referenced research project has been approved by an AISD External Research Review Committee. The researcher, Mr. Bruno Villarreal, with the University of Texas, is interested in working with your school on this project.

In accordance with our procedures, the researcher, Mr. Villarreal, will contact you personally to discuss the possibility of implementation. A copy of his proposal is enclosed for your information.

If you review the proposal and you do not wish to participate, please let me know as soon as possible. Otherwise, she will be contacting you soon.

Please call me if you have any questions (4-9804). Thank you.

1111 West 6th Street, D350, Austin, TX 78703

Appendix B
Student Identification Profile

Austin ISD G/T Program
Student Identification Profile
Bilingual/ESL Special Form

Selected for Gifted Program: Yes No

Check areas of strength for G/T services:
_____ Language Arts _____ Social Studies
_____ Mathematics _____ Science

Student: _____ I.D.# _____ Grade:_____
(Last name, first name)
School: _____ Teacher:_____ Date:_____

Parents' permission has been received to proceed with testing: ____ No ____ Yes

Criteria	**Max. Score**	**Target Score**	**Student Score**	**Comments**
Nomination Information				
Teacher Nomination (required - complete all):				
Adapted/Purdue Academic Scales (language arts)	60	NA		
Adapted/Purdue Academic Scales (math)	60	NA		
Adapted/Purdue Academic Scales (science)	60	NA		
Adapted/Purdue Academic Scales (social studies)	60	NA		
Parent Nomination (required)	45	NA		
Peer/Self Nomination (circle one - optional)	60	NA		
Screening Information				
Raven's Progressive Matrices	100%	90%		
Traits, Aptitudes, Behaviors	100	80		
TABS Observation Period (minimum of 6 weeks):				
Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test	*%ile*	*Age Equiv.*	*CALP Level*	**Comments**
Student Scores				
BVAT Narrative notes:				
Portfolio: *Collect exemplary work in all areas*	*Average*	*Above Avg.*	*High*	*Comments*
Portfolio (language arts)				
Portfolio (math)				
Portfolio (science)				
Portfolio (social studies)				
Portfolio Collection Period (minimum of 6 weeks):				

Additional Documented Evidence of Giftedness (Include next page, Bilingual Documentation)

Criteria/Product/Performance	**Comments/Score**

Appendix C
Principal Interview Protocol

Background

1. What is your educational history? Were you in a gifted program as a child?
2. Why did you become an educator?
3. What is your professional history and certification(s)?
4. How long have you been the principal of your school?
5. Do you have any children that are in a gifted program? If so, what was the evaluation process like for you as a parent?

School policy

6. How is a child nominated for evaluation for the gifted program?
7. What are the procedures entailed in the evaluation process?
8. What instruments are used in the evaluation?
9. What, if any, special procedures or alternatives are used to evaluate children from racial/ethnic minority groups or children who are English learners (ELs)?
10. **How do you encourage teachers to nominate a student, especially an EL, for the gifted program?**
11. How would you describe your role in promoting gifted EL Latinos in the gifted program?

Diversity

12. When did you first become interested in gifted children?
13. What benefits or assets do you believe gifted EL Latinos bring to the gifted program?
14. If you could identify all gifted EL Latinos, what percent of the population do you think you would identify?
15. Have you attended any training on giftedness or gifted minorities? If so, what did you learn?
16. What characteristics (e.g., behavioral; intellectual; personality) do you feel are typical of gifted children? Gifted minorities? Gifted EL Latinos?
17. How difficult do you think it is to identify gifted EL Latinos? What might be some barriers?
18. **What policies have you enacted that you think have helped to overcome these barriers?**

Parental involvement

19. What role do you believe parents play in the evaluation process?
20. What information do you provide parents about the gifted program in terms of services, availability, and nomination and evaluation processes?
21. **How do you foster effective relationships with the various communities that your school serves?**
22. **What policies do you feel promote a welcoming and open atmosphere for parents, particularly parents who are not proficient in English?**
23. How do you encourage the parents, especially Spanish-speaking parents, to nominate their children for evaluation?

Appendix D
Teacher Interview Protocol

Background

1. What is your educational history? Were you in a gifted program as a child?
2. Why did you become an educator?
3. What is your professional history and certification(s)?
4. How long have you been a teacher in your school?
5. Do you have any children that are in a gifted program? If so, what was the evaluation process like for you as a parent?

School policy

6. How is a child nominated for evaluation for the gifted program?
7. What are the procedures entailed in the evaluation process?
8. What instruments are used in the evaluation?
9. What, if any, special procedures or alternatives are used to evaluate children from racial/ethnic minority groups or children who are English learners (ELs)?
10. How many children have you nominated for the gifted program?
11. How would you describe your role in promoting gifted EL Latinos in the gifted program?

Diversity

12. When did you first become interested in gifted children?
13. What benefits or assets do you believe gifted EL Latinos bring to the gifted program?
14. If you could identify all gifted EL Latinos, what percent of the population do you think you would identify?
15. Have you attended any training on giftedness or gifted minorities? If so, what did you learn?
16. What characteristics (e.g., behavioral; intellectual; personality) do you feel are typical of gifted children? Gifted minorities? Gifted EL Latinos?
17. How difficult do you think it is to identify gifted EL Latinos? What might be some barriers?
18. What, if any, actions do you think you have undertaken that have helped to overcome these barriers?

Parental involvement

19. What role do you believe parents play in the evaluation process?
20. What information do you provide parents about the gifted program in terms of services, availability, and nomination and evaluation processes?
21. How much communication do you think you have with parents during the assessment process? Should there be more or less communication? Why or why not?
22. How do you promote a welcoming and open atmosphere for parents, particularly parents who are not proficient in English?
23. How do you encourage parents, especially Spanish-speaking parents, to nominate their children for evaluation?

Appendix E
G/T Advocate Interview Protocol

Training

1. How are children nominated for evaluation for the gifted program?
2. What are the eligibility criteria for the gifted program?
3. What, if any, special procedures or alternatives are used to evaluate children from racial/ethnic minority groups or children who are English learners (ELs)?
4. What specialized training have you had to assess EL and bilingual children?
5. What specialized training or experience have you had for evaluating gifted children? Gifted minorities? Gifted EL Latinos?

Instrumentation

6. What assessment procedures do you typically use to evaluate EL children for the gifted program?
7. Do you assess in Spanish? How much does a child's Spanish or English proficiency affect the likelihood they will be identified?
8. How much weight do intelligence or achievement test results carry in assessing ELs?
9. How are parent and/or teacher observations incorporated in your data collection? How are the data obtained?
10. Do you use behavioral rating scales in the assessment process? If so, how do you incorporate the data obtained?
11. What, if any informal measures are used in the assessment process?

Decisionmaking

12. How much do parents of EL children participate in the assessment process?
13. How much does the principal or teachers participate in the assessment process?
14. How is the decision made to place an EL child in the gifted program?
15. Who makes the final decision to place an EL child in the gifted program?
16. How are borderline cases dealt with?
17. What options do parents have to appeal a decision not to place their child in the gifted program?

Appendix F
Content Analysis Coding Categories

AFFIRMATION: The principle of affirmation that gifted ELs exist and can be identified. "There *have* to be gifted bilingual children!"

COMMITMENT: Personnel are committed to improving the representation of ELs in G/T. "This is a priority for me."

AWARENESS: Awareness of past history, inequities, improvement in processes, etc. "We used to have so few nominated kids, but now things have gotten better."

CHILD ADVOCACY: Concern for the best interest of the child. "Even if I didn't think ELs could be gifted, I'd nominate because this child would be best served in the G/T program."

EQUITY: Improving access to G/T for EL children improves the educational experiences for all ELs. "I want to make sure the bilingual kids get the same opportunities that the English-speaking kids get."

KNOWLEDGE OF PROCESS: Personnel's knowledge of the evaluation process for G/T. "Parents or teachers can nominate."

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Involvement with the G/T program improves teaching abilities. "I wanted to be able to work with these kids and challenge myself."

GIFTED CHARACTERISTICS: Knowledge about the characteristics of giftedness in general, with racial/ethnic groups, and with ELs. "It's the kind of questions they ask, their creativity, curiosity, their desire go beyond what is asked of them."

LANGUAGE & CULTURE: Specific reference to linguistic or cultural differences of EL gifted children. "They bring a different cultural perspective to the program."

PARENT ADVOCACY: Concern for EL parents' situations, backgrounds, histories. "The parents may not be aware that G/T programs are available or that their kids could qualify."

PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE: Concern for the amount of information parents have about G/T programs, evaluation, etc. "We've worked really hard to educate the parents about the program."

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: Concern for the degree to which parents participate in the process. "We encourage parents to nominate, ask questions about the program, etc."

NONDISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT: Use of nondiscriminatory procedures in the evaluation process. "The child's language does not matter at all in our decisions."

Appendix G
Gifted Evaluation Assessment Battery Descriptions

The Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) is "designed to assess the pattern and level of students' development in reasoning and problem solving with verbal, quantitative, and spatial symbols" (Thorndike & Hagen, 1993). The CogAT provides four Standard Scores: the Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal Standard Age scores that are added together to form the Composite score. Each Standard Score has mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The CogAT was normed on 160,000 public and private school students in 1992. Reviewers report that the CogAT has good reliability and validity, with coefficients ranging form the mid-.80s to the mid-.90s.

The Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT) "provides a measure of overall verbal ability and an unique combination of cognitive/academic language abilities for bilingual individuals" (Muñoz-Sandoval, Cummins, Alvarado, & Ruef, 1998). The BVAT is available in 16 languages, and consists of three subtests, Picture Vocabulary, Oral Vocabulary, and Verbal Analogies. Items are first administered in English; items missed in English are then repeated in the native language. This administration produces scores that are added together to form the English Language Proficiency (ELP) and Bilingual Verbal Ability (BVA) scores. Each subtest score, ELP, and BVA scores have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The BVAT was normed on a subset of the standardization sample of the Woodcock-Johnson-Revised Tests of Cognitive Ability, consisting of 3,212 test takers. Reliability estimates for the three subtests were reported to be in the low-.90s. The median reliability estimate for the ELP was reported to be .96, while the only reliability estimate listed for the BVA was .84. Validity estimated were reported by reviewers to range from the mid-.80s to low-.90s.

The Raven's Progressive Matrices is measure of nonverbal reasoning ability based on figural stimuli. Raw scores are converted to percentile ranks. According to Sattler (1992), the most recent North American norms were obtained in 1986. It is unclear if these normed were used to calculate percentile ranks, or if a local norming sample was obtained to calculate percentiles ranks. Reliability and validity coefficients vary widely, depending on the populations studied, ranging from the low-.50s to the mid-.80s.

The Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale (TABS; Frasier, 1994) is a observational scale for teachers to rate students on 10 categories of behaviors: Motivation, Interests, Communication Skills, Problem-Solving Abilities, Memory, Inquiry, Insight, Reasoning, Imagination/Creativity, and Humor. Teachers rate students on a scale from 1 to 10 in each category, and the 10 ratings are summed together for a total score. In addition, teachers may also write comments on students' behaviors. The TABS, however, was not standardized, thus there are no norms or psychometric properties to report.

The Adapted Academic Scales (AAS) is an observational measure for teachers to rate students' academic abilities in the four core content areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Teachers rate students on 12 questions relating to particular academic skills on a scale from 1 to 5. The ratings are then summed for a total scale rating. The AAS, however, was not standardized, thus there are no norms or psychometric properties to report.

The student portfolio ratings are informal measures based on the Gifted Selection Committee (GSC) review of portfolio materials in the four core content areas. In the Student Identification Profile, the GSC marked their evaluation in each content area in one of three categories: average, above average, and high. I converted this categories to numerical ratings: average = 1; above average = 2; high = 3. Given that not every student profile had portfolio ratings for every content area, a blank was scored as 0.

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